

THE THREEFOLD WAY

AN AID TO CONVERSION

PAUL B. BULL

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THE THREEFOLD WAY

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THE THREEFOLD WAY

AN AID TO CONVERSION

BY

PAUL B. BULL, M.A.

PRIEST OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION

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PREFACE

THE following Spiritual Exercises are an expansion of a little Manual published by Mr. R. Jackson, 16 Commercial Street, Leeds, under the same title, which Mr. Jackson has kindly allowed me to use again. They are based on the Spiritual Exercises of S. Ignatius Loyola; but I have ventured at many points to vary the order, and to supply what seemed to be desirable additions. In the Roman Catholic Church the Spiritual Exercises of S. Ignatius have been very fruitful in the conversion and the entire consecration of souls; and I pray that this attempt to reproduce something of their method for the use of souls in our Communion may be similarly blessed.

It is obvious that the formal treatment of Truth, and this method of applying it to the soul will not appeal to persons of a certain kind of temperament. May they attain the same end of union with God by some other method. For God reveals Himself to men in many different ways.

I have again to express my deep gratitude to Father Hart for his patient labour in correcting the proofs, and for many useful suggestions.

PAUL B. BULL, C.R.

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THE THREEFOLD WAY

INTRODUCTION

Introductory. The purpose of these Exercises is to provide a course of Instruction, Prayer and Meditation by which a person who is in earnest about his soul's salvation may correct whatever in him is displeasing to God, and become more fervent in His service, and entirely consecrated to the fulfilment of His Will. They are divided into a Foundation Meditation and the Threefold Way—the Purgative, the Illuminative and the Unitive.

The Foundation. The first Meditation is meant to give the soul a clear vision of the purpose with which it was created, and to lead it to a strong and generous resolve to concentrate every energy to the fulfilment of that purpose.

1. *The Purgative Way* consists of exercises which are intended to give us a knowledge of ourselves and a hatred of sin ; to remove the obstacles which lie in our path by helping us to detest and confess our sins ; to free us, not only from the power of sin, but also from the disorderly affections which so often deflect us from our true end ; to give us that self-possession and self-control which are essential to our true freedom ; and to set us free to devote all our energies to the attainment of our end.

2. *The Illuminative Way* consists of exercises which are intended to fasten the mind on Jesus Christ, and to lead us to take Him as our Example, to trust Him as our Saviour, to follow Him as our Guide, to love Him as our Friend, to obey Him as our King, and to worship Him as our God. This leads to exercises which are intended to encourage us to follow our Lord in a more perfect manner, to imitate Him more closely, to love Him more fervently, and to abandon ourselves to Him with the utmost courage and generosity.

3. *The Unitive Way* consists of exercises which are intended to inflame and inspire us by placing before us for our contemplation our Lord in His life of exaltation, and to lead us to aspire to the closest union with God in love, and to a perfect conformity of our desires with His holy Will.

I. THE UTILITY OF THE EXERCISES.

The aim of the Exercises is the true conversion and the entire consecration of the soul to God. The utility of such exercises is especially great at the present time, both (1) for the individual soul (2) and for the Church :—

1. *For the Soul.* The special sin of an age of superficial culture and of worldly prosperity such as our own is the sin of Tepidity or Lukewarmness. We are tempted to treat religion as a desirable adornment rather than as the essential mainspring of our lives. We are inclined to be content with respectability rather than to strive after holiness, to acquiesce in a low standard of attainment rather than to aspire to perfection. But God commands us, “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy ; for I am holy ” (Lev. xi. 44). “Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect ” (S. Matt. v. 48). Does God then demand the same standard of

attainment from all alike, in spite of their varying natures and circumstances? No. He does not demand the same standard of attainment, but He does demand the same standard of effort, that each of us should try to be the best we can be. He will not reject our best, nor accept our second best.

The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola, on which the following exercises are based, have for four hundred years been the means of converting many souls from sin, of kindling lukewarm souls with the flame of enthusiasm, of awakening worldly souls to the perils of their state, of encouraging imperfect souls to aspire after perfection, and of training saintly souls in the way of holiness. S. Francis de Sales, S. Charles Borromeo, S. Philip Neri, S. Francis Xavier and S. Teresa attribute to them the commencement or the growth of their sanctity.

(Many persons who are free from mortal sin miss all the joy and splendour of religion because they try to make a compromise with the world, and to serve God with half their heart.) Their religion is sufficient to spoil the pleasures of sin without being sufficient to win the joy of the Spirit. Others practise a formal religion without ever appropriating divine truth to themselves, never making it their own so that it may become a living force in their lives. Beneath the searching analysis and constant challenge of these Exercises, such souls will spring to life and begin to serve God with their whole heart. But we may also hope that by securing the salvation and perfection of the individual soul the exercises will strengthen and enrich the Church.

2. *For the Church.* Signs are not wanting that the time of Anti-Christ is approaching. The Beast and the False Prophet have been revealed in the World Power

and the false philosophy which plunged Europe into war. The indifference to and contempt for God which are manifest in the neglect of Public Worship, the perishing of the religious instinct and the decay of moral sanctions may soon pass from negative indifference into active hatred of Christ. Nominal Christians will not be able to stand the strain of active hostility. The age demands, and the Church must train, martyrs who will witness for Christ "even unto death." The Ignatian exercises have the power to train martyrs. In the Society of Jesus they have bred martyrs whom no bribe could seduce and no fear of suffering could intimidate, whose zeal for God no pain could quench. If rightly used they strengthen the will to withstand the most violent assaults of the Adversary, and in answer to the appeal to chivalry to rise to the loftiest heights of heroism. The age of compromise has passed. The day of decision has dawned. And in these Exercises Christ flings down His ancient challenge to the world, and holds out a blood-stained Cross to all who would follow Him. "If any man willeth to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me" (S. Luke ix. 23).

Will you be one of those who have the courage to answer His call, and by earnestly following these Exercises with sincerity and thoroughness to discipline yourself until you are fit to take your place in the ranks of His great Army, the noble Army of Martyrs?

II. HOW TO USE THE EXERCISES.

1. The best use of the Exercises will be in a prolonged Retreat. If you can arrange to do so, put aside a month to be wholly devoted to the consideration of your eternal welfare. Retire to some Religious House or to some

solitary place, and there give your whole attention to waiting upon God.

2. But if it is impossible for you to secure so long a period of retirement and freedom from worldly cares, the Exercises may be used while you fulfil your daily duties, if you resolutely keep yourself free from social engagements, and resolve to allow nothing to deprive you of your fixed time for communion with God in meditation. We have grown too much accustomed to allowing our lives to be dominated by the clamorous demands of the world, and to devoting only our spare time to religious exercises. Thus "the care of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word and he becometh unfruitful" (S. Matt. xiii. 22). If you are in earnest you will give the Exercises *the first place* in your life; and, while performing the necessary duties of your state, you will subordinate everything else to winning the rich blessings which God has in store for you if you perform the Exercises faithfully. You must not expect God to bless a half-hearted service. He will bless you only in proportion to the measure of your self-sacrifice and zeal in seeking to know and do His Will.

3. Some persons find it useful to work steadily through the exercises once every year in Advent or Lent, so as to renew the fervour of their conversion. In addition to this, they use various parts of them according to their need and in harmony with the season of the Church's Year.

III. RULES FOR MAKING THE EXERCISES.

It is necessary that you should enter on these Exercises in the right spirit. The aim of this work is:—

First, the entire reformation of your life; secondly, a

more marked progress in virtue ; thirdly, a more perfect consecration of yourself to knowing and doing the holy Will of God.

So great an undertaking as the true conversion of your soul and the entire consecration of your life must be marked by—

1. *A serious spirit.* You must not undertake them in a desultory way, as you may read your newspaper, not lightly passing over those parts which do not attract or interest you at the time, not in the spirit of levity and frivolity, with wandering inattentive mind, but in the spirit of intense seriousness, as a condemned criminal awaiting execution would study the plan by which he might win pardon and deliverance.

2. *With perseverance.* You must not allow yourself to become mechanical, devoting merely a fixed time to each Meditation ; for on some occasions the spirit is more alert and receptive than at other times. You should persevere with every Meditation until it has produced the desired fruit in your soul. It needs much determination and steadfast courage to prevent worldly interruptions encroaching on the time allotted to your meditation.

3. *With recollection.* Throughout the day you should constantly cultivate the sense of God's Presence by the frequent use of short ejaculations or aspirations such as, "Thou, God, seest me."

4. *With courage and sincerity.* It is useless — nay, worse than useless, it is dangerous—to seek to know God's Will unless you mean to try to do it when it is known. Many persons love talking about religion, and have a natural inclination towards religious things : but if the reformation of their lives demands a funda-

mental change in their habits, they avoid this by inventing excuses capable of deceiving themselves; but such excuses cannot deceive God. They are not sincere. They do not wish to be untruthful, but they lack the courage of mortification. When you seek to know God's Will for you, there is great need to pray for courage to do it. Constantly pray, "O God, help me to know Thy holy Will, and give me courage to do it." "O God, help me to be sincere, and give me courage." We only mock God in our meditations unless at every point we at least desire to say in all sincerity, "All that Thou hast commanded us we will do, and whither Thou sendest us we will go" (Josh. i. 16). (See Lecture on Sincerity and Courage, p. 10.)

IV. A METHOD OF MEDITATION.

Spend a quarter of an hour in reading over the subject for your next day's meditation just before retiring for the night, and recall it when you awaken. Devote from half an hour to an hour to the main Meditation, noting down on paper the points which God especially brings home to your heart. Recall these at midday and again in the evening, and renew your affections and resolutions. It must be carefully borne in mind that what is put before you in the following pages are not meditations, but *notes which may give you the material for meditation*.

When meditating on an event in history, the following method may be adopted:—

Preparation.

i. Kneel down. Realize God's Presence. Ask for His Assistance. Say the "Our Father," "Hail Mary," and the "Veni Creator."

ii. Read the passage of Scripture on which the Meditation is to be based.

iii. Ask for the Grace or Virtue which you hope for as the fruit of your Meditation, such as Hatred of Sin—Penitence—Humility—Love.

1. *Exercise the Imagination.* Reconstruct the scene. Either historical or imaginary. Historical accuracy of details is unimportant.

2. *Apply the Senses.* 1. See the persons. 2. Hear their words. 3. Consider their actions.

3. *Interrogation.* Ask some of these questions : Who ? Where ? When ? How ? What ? Why ? Whence ? For whom ? Whither ?

In this, as in all things, be careful not to become mechanical. If you use your common sense, you will soon see which questions are needed on each subject. The object of the questions is to make the mind so familiar with the scene and its significance that you can meditate upon it without effort, as though you yourself were really present, e.g. at Bethlehem or on Calvary.

4. *Consideration.* When the scene or subject has been carefully grasped, then reflect on the points suggested. Here again you must not be mechanical. When God makes any thought to burn with a special lustre, dwell on it as long as it seems profitable to do so. The whole purpose of the mechanism of Meditation is to set the spirit free for undistracted communion with God. If you worry about the mechanism you will miss the Spirit.

If you are going for a bicycle ride to visit a friend in a beautiful country, it is well before you start to learn and practise the rules for keeping your balance, e.g. to turn the wheel in the direction in which you are falling,

and so on. It is also well before starting to see that the machine is in good order and well oiled, and that, through a careful study of the map, you know your way. But the sooner you are so familiar with these rules and this mechanism that you can relegate it all to your sub-conscious activities, the sooner will your spirit be free for the purposes of your journey. It would be a disaster if you were to return from your journey and have to confess that you were so much absorbed in keeping your balance, and so anxious about the machine, and so closely engaged in studying the map, that you never saw the scenery and could not attend to what your friend said to you!

Again, in playing the piano it is necessary to practise scales until you are so familiar with the piano that your fingers instinctively strike the right notes. It is only then that your spirit is free to enter into the spirit of the master musician and to share his inspiration, to rejoice in his immortal thoughts, and to move freely in heavenly places. So the mechanism of Meditation is meant to liberate your soul to move freely in heavenly places and hold free communion with God that you may learn His holy Will for you.

As you reflect on the points suggested, note down on paper any thought which especially strikes you. Thus you will be able to remind yourself of it in the repetitions at noon and at eventide.

5. *Colloquies*, or conversations. Turn all your reflections into prayers or addresses to our dear Lord. This will prevent the Meditation becoming a mere dry intellectual exercise, and will give free movement to your affections and emotions. In learning French or any other foreign language, we have to begin by patient and often weary study of grammar and words and fixed phrases until our mind is so well stored with the right

words that they spring up naturally to express our needs or feelings. When the mechanism of the language can be relegated to our sub-conscious self and when the words come without conscious effort, then we are free to converse with our friend without the aid of the fixed sentences of a conversation book. So the mechanism of Meditation should free your spirit to hold blessed communion with our Lord.

V. LECTURE ON COURAGE AND SINCERITY.

1. *Courage.* "All that Thou hast commanded us we will do, and whither Thou sendest us we will go" (Josh. i. 16). So spake the people of Reuben to Joshua before crossing Jordan to root out the heathen and win the promised land. So must you say to God before entering on the Purgative Way, the aim of which is to root out your vices and those habits which hinder you from progressing in the Way of Holiness. Before undertaking the exercises it is necessary that you should have some real degree of sincerity and courage. Without these, you will only deceive yourself by the use of unreal phrases and lofty aspirations which have no genuine basis in your heart and will.

But you will say "You must make some allowance for my weakness. I cannot at once attain to the heroic courage of Saints." This is true and we know it well. All that we demand is that you should be sincere and truthful in your dealings with God: otherwise He cannot help you, for the flame of His Holiness burns up every falsehood and insincerity.

2. *Three Degrees of Courage.* There are three degrees in acquiring the Courage of Mortification. First, *to desire to have this courage.* This is the lowest degree which

is consistent with sincerity. Secondly, *to act as though you had this courage*. We can sometimes control our actions when we cannot control our inclinations. This is a higher degree. It is courageous action with conscious effort. The third degree of courage is *to act courageously without effort*, with joy and the full support of heart and mind and will.

A soldier may begin with the desire to be courageous. So may you. He admires courage in others. He longs to be courageous. He hopes and fully intends to do his duty faithfully, and he does his best to drive away his fears. If in the hour of crisis when he is ordered to storm a trench his courage fails, this would show that he is weak ; but it would not show that he is insincere. He is a coward. But he is less of a coward, and has more courage than the man who never even volunteered to fight for Justice, Righteousness and Liberty. He has more courage than the man who says "I am sure I shall fail, so it is no use trying." It is always better to try and to fail than not even to try. This same soldier in his second battle rises to the second degree of courage. When the order to storm the enemy's trench is given, he says to himself, "I am horribly afraid. My heart is dissolving within me. I wish I had courage. But I know that I have not. I wish I were in a place of safety. But I am determined to do whatever I am told to do, though I know that it means almost certain death." This is a very high degree of courage. For courage is not the absence of fear but its conquest. Perhaps in his third battle this soldier will find himself so anxious to get at the enemy, so devoted to his General, so absorbed in the thoughts of victory at any cost, that he will not have to make an effort to do the right thing. Courage has now become for him an instinct. As one young

British officer said in France when asked whether he felt fear, "Oh! you don't think of that sort of thing. You simply think of Christ and go straight on." The man has become so absorbed in his great enterprise that he is indifferent to everything else.

This is the holy indifference or detachment which we must cultivate in the service of Christ. But this holy indifference or detachment is the perfect fruit of an entirely consecrated life, and God will not expect us to begin with it. We may have to begin with the first degree of courage—the *wholehearted desire* to have the courage to do the Will of God, and a *full intention* to do our best. This warning is necessary, as many souls are ruined by insincerity and self-deception.

3. *Sincerity*. Many persons think that they are sincere when they might know that they are not so. They often deceive themselves by using the consecrated phrases of religion without really trying to mean them. They speak about "a true conversion" and "entire consecration"; but if the re-formation of their lives requires a change in the hour of dinner, or is likely to affect their profits or dividends, they fail to make these changes.

Inconsistency of life may spring either from weakness or from self-deception. God will be patient with weakness as long as we really keep on trying. But He will not be patient with insincerity: for this is a falsehood which destroys His image in the soul. Insincerity begins by our trying to deceive others; it often ends by our succeeding in deceiving ourselves. Self-deception is a most deadly sin, and no form of self-deception is so blinding as that which clothes itself in religious phraseology. It was the professedly religious men—Pharisees, not open sinners, publicans or harlots—who crucified the Son of God. Our

Lord calls them "blind leaders of the blind," and scourges their hypocrisy with terrible denunciation.

The test of the sincerity of your resolves and aspirations is to be found in the courage with which you try to carry them into effect. If you resolve to forsake some sin and yet do not try to avoid the occasion of that sin,—“the person, place, or thing which imperils your virtue in the matter,”—you may rightly judge that your resolve is not quite sincere. If you resolve to acquire some virtue, and yet do not adopt the means which will best enable you to acquire it, you should ask yourself, “Am I really in earnest?” The Devil, who is the father of lies and works chiefly by falsehood and deceit, will always suggest to you innumerable excuses and reasons why you should not carry out the brave resolve which God has put into your heart. Make this a rule and test of sincerity. “If I love and desire the end, I must love the means which help me to attain the end. If I will not use the best means, then I do not sincerely love and desire the end.”

THE FOUNDATION

1. *Man was created to praise and worship and serve God our Lord, and thereby to save his soul.*

2. *And the other things on the face of the earth were created for man's sake, that they might help him in following out the end for which he was created.*

3. *Hence it follows that man should make use of creatures so far as they help him toward his end, and should withdraw (or abstain) from them in so far as they are a hindrance to him in regard to that end.*

4. *Wherefore it is necessary to make ourselves detached in regard of all created things—in all that is left to the liberty of our free will, and is not forbidden it—so that we on our part should not wish for health rather than sickness, for riches rather than poverty, for honour rather than ignominy, for a long life rather than a short life, and so in all other matters, solely desiring and choosing those things which may better lead us to the end for which we were created.*

In these words St. Ignatius lays down the Principle and Foundation of a holy life. It is so necessary that this Foundation should be surely laid that you must not

expect to secure this in one meditation. It is well to devote a whole week to appropriating the truths enunciated in this statement, a statement so deep that it fathoms the great depths of the philosophy of life, so simple that a child can grasp it, so reasonable that no rational being can withstand it, so sublime that to realize it fully in your life would be to attain to perfect self-control.

It may discourage you when you first read it, as it seems impossible to attain to such perfect detachment. But you must not be discouraged, as this demand for perfect detachment, or "holy indifference" as it is called, represents, not a spirit which we already have, but an ideal to which we must strive to attain,—a high and lofty ideal which commends itself to our reason, and stimulates and inspires us to do our best.

A soldier in prison who, through the window of his cell, can gaze upon the hills where lie home and freedom finds that vision stimulates his courage and his hope. It saves him from the dull despair which would acquiesce in captivity and slavery. It encourages him to persevere with patience in employing *the best means* and *all the means* which will win his freedom. It checks him from doing anything which would be an impediment to his liberation. So in the Foundation, St. Ignatius gives us a vision of God's purpose for us, and the best means for attaining that end by disciplining ourselves into perfect detachment or holy indifference.

A recruit when he joins the Army has a rational ideal of holy indifference placed before him. He must serve and obey his King, in whatever manner and how and when and where he may be told to do so. He recognizes this ideal of holy indifference as good and right. But it requires long months of effort, of the conquest of likes and dislikes, of self-sup-

pression and self-control, of self-restraint and submission to the will of others before he becomes a perfectly disciplined soldier. So with the ideal of holy indifference in God's service. The Foundation gives us a rational ideal, an inspiring vision of the purpose of our creation, the hope of our redemption, as well as of the spirit in which we must try to co-operate with the holy Will of God. It is meant to convince our reason. That is the first step to winning the full co-operation of our heart and will.

We may meditate upon it in three sections :—(1) The end of man. (2) The end of other creatures. (3) The spirit of detachment or holy indifference.

INSTRUCTION ON THE END OF MAN

Man was created to praise and worship and serve the Lord our God and thereby to save his soul.

INSTRUCTION. WHAT IS MAN ?

CONSIDER.

Philosophy asks us three questions about ourselves. What am I ? Whence came I ? Whither am I going ?

1. *What am I ?* I am a being with a twofold nature—a partnership of body and soul. These in our earthly life are so closely united that they interpenetrate and react one upon another. When the body is disordered or undeveloped it depresses the soul. When the soul is exalted it uplifts and empowers the body. A mother lying paralysed upon the bed with her new-born infant has been known to leap up and run out into the garden when she heard that the house was on fire. The intense desire to save her child's life gave power to her body which until then it lacked. The body is to the soul what an organ is to the musician, or an engine to the engine

driver, what the brush is to the artist. It is the instrument of self-expression and self-development which brings us into communion with other persons and with created things. It is the means by which the unseen spirit energizes in the phenomenal world, i.e. the world of those things which appear: and so it is the means by which the soul develops and grows by experience, and conflict, by temptation and effort.

2. *Whence came I? Of what is my body made?* It is made of chemicals—carbon, phosphorus, lime and water and sodium chloride—which are held together by some unknown force called life. From the dust it came, being woven up through countless ages, through many forms, until it had become fit to be the throne of mind and the palace of a soul. Then “God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (Gen. ii. 7). The body is now not only the palace of a soul; it is also the shrine of a God. For the soul is made in God’s image in our power to think what is true and will what is right and love what is good. The body then comes from the dust. Whence comes the soul? We may say that the soul comes from the heart of God. “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness” (Gen. i. 26).

3. *Whither am I going?* “God created man for incorruption, and made him an image of His own proper being” (Wis. ii. 23). God made you in order that you might praise and worship and serve Him here, and be happy with Him for ever hereafter. Your body will return to the dust from which it came. Your soul is in your hands. Either you will fulfil your destiny and become for all eternity the loving companion of God, or you will destroy in your soul its capacity for God, and

condemn yourself to an eternity apart from Him. The exercises will help you to fulfil God's purpose for you.

While philosophy suggests these three questions, God asks a fourth.

4. "*Where art thou?*" This was the question God asked of man in the garden of Eden. He asks you the same question. "*Where art thou?*" Art thou eagerly pressing forward on the Narrow Way, daily drawing nearer to thy goal? Or art thou wandering aimlessly about in the pursuit of pleasure? Art thou a slave of lust, bound with the chains of evil habits? Art thou wandering away from God, blinded by pride and not knowing where thou art or whither thou art wending? Art thou standing on the threshold of thy life at the parting of the Ways? Or art thou passing life's meridian, and beginning to draw near to the inevitable end of thy time of probation? Art thou hiding from God amidst the pleasures and cares and distractions of the world? Wherever thou art, come out into the sunlight of God's presence, and pause for a solemn moment that thou mayest know thyself and Him.

5. "*Know thyself.*" This was the motto inscribed on the portals of the Greek Temple, and it is the basis on which a rational life must be built. Many lives are a tragedy of aimlessness. Many persons have never thought seriously on the end or meaning or purpose of life, the reason why God made them. They float aimlessly about on the sunlit sea of life wherever the wind may blow them or the tide may draw them. They do not know what are their real motives or what is their true character. They constantly deceive themselves. They notice with severe condemnation in others the very sins of pride and selfishness to which in themselves they are blind. They

pass their life in a dream of self-deception. And yet every day brings them nearer to that time when we shall see God "face to face," and know even as we are known. The Exercises should help you to know yourself as you really are in God's sight. When one man came forth from a retreat under the Ignatian Exercises, his friend asked him, "Did they not show you all kinds of horrors, and foul devils?" "Worse than that," he answered, "they showed me myself!"

MEDITATION ON THE END OF MAN

*Man was created to praise and worship and serve the Lord
our God and thereby to save his soul.*

CONSIDER.

POINT I. I COME FROM GOD.

1. *Where were you when God created the heaven and the earth?* God asks you, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job xxxviii. 4). Nowhere. Worlds were born and perished; countless millions of men were born, loved and hated, bought and sold, sinned and suffered, sickened and died; but you were nowhere, except in the mind of God.

Where were you a hundred years ago? Nowhere, except in the mind and heart of God. "Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee" (Jer. i. 5).

2. *God called you into being for His glory.* "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine" (Is. xliii. 1). "Every one that is called by My name and whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Is. xliii. 7). God made

you to reflect His character and to promote His glory. Have you done this ? Or have you lived for your own glory and pleasure ?

3. *God created you out of pure love.* “The Lord appeared of old unto me saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love ; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee ” (Jer. xxxi. 3).

4. *God chose to create you* when He might have created new worlds or angels. These would have obeyed His will and returned His love. Have you done so ?

5. *God made you in His image.* “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.” “God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him ” (Gen. i. 26). “God created man for incorruption, and made him an image of His own proper being ” (Wis. ii. 23).

6. *God upholds you every moment in being.* “Behold My servant whom I uphold ; My chosen in whom My soul delighteth. I have put My spirit upon him ” (Is. xlii. 1).

“The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life ” (Job xxxiii. 4).

“There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding ” (Job xxxii. 8).

“God Himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things . . . in Him we live and move and have our being ” (Acts xvii. 25, 28).

Because God created you for His glory you are bound to serve Him with all your heart and mind and soul and strength.

Read Psalm cxxxix. kneeling, and make acts of (i.) Humility at your own nothingness ; (ii.) Adoration for God's condescension in creating you ; (iii.) Gratitude for His having given you being.

POINT II. I BELONG TO GOD.

1. *To serve God is your essential end or business*, the purpose for which you were created.

2. *To serve God is your only business*. If this is not the mainspring and background of your life you are living in vain—you are worthless. A man may have ruled empires, conquered nations, preached to multitudes, won the applause of millions : but if he has failed to serve God he is worse than nothing.

Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. and v. 18–28) rose to the pinnacle of worldly power and glory. “But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him,” and “his heart was made like the beasts,” “until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that He setteth up over it whomsoever He will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knowest all this ; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven : . . . the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified” . . . therefore “thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.”

Are you a Communicant, and can you say, “Lord, we did eat and drink in Thy Presence and Thou didst teach in our streets”? He will say, “I tell you *I know not whence ye are* ; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity” (S. Luke xiii. 26, 27).

Are you a great orator, and have you enchanted thousands by your eloquence? Consider Herod, who arrayed himself in royal apparel, and sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto the people so that they cried,

“ ‘The voice of a god and not of a man.’ And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost ” (Acts xii. 21).

On the other hand, one who is poor, unknown, despised, a cripple, an invalid confined to a sick bed, *if he has served God*, has attained his end. “ He was despised and rejected of men ” (Is. liii. 3). “ Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of them that afflicted him, and them that make his labours of no account. When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the marvel of God’s salvation. They shall say within themselves repenting, and for distress of spirit shall they groan : ‘ This was he whom aforetime we had in derision, and made a parable of reproach : We fools accounted his life madness, and his end without honour ; How was he numbered among sons of God ? And how is his lot among Saints ? ’ ” (Wis. v. 1–5).

3. *To serve God is your supreme business.* Riches, fame, success are of no importance. They are non-moral—that is they are not good or bad in themselves ; it depends on the way in which they are used whether they become good or bad. They may be either a help or a hindrance to your salvation. Riches used for God are a means to your end, and may enable you to serve God, not better, but in a larger sphere of activity. But on the other hand, they may ruin your soul by the temptation to rely on them instead of on God, or to use them selfishly. Fame and the love of popularity may enable you to influence larger numbers for God. On the other hand, they frequently destroy the soul of ambitious men by leading them to shrink from the path of duty when it leads to unpopularity, and to refuse to obey God’s Will

if some righteous protest or act of justice would imperil their worldly position or influence.

When with deep sincerity and strong resolve and unflinching courage you resolve to make the service of God the one supreme business of your life and the mainspring of all your activities, then your central will is consecrated and it does not matter in the least what happens on the surface of your life, how or where you may be called upon to serve Him ; whether in poverty or wealth, in sickness or health, in a long life or a short one, by life or by death.

Act of Adoration. " Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power : for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created " (Rev. iv. 11).

Act of Sorrow for Sin. O my God, I grieve for love of Thee that I have so often failed to serve Thee as I should. I confess that I have sought my own will, my own pleasure, and my own glory instead of Thine.

POINT III. I AM DESTINED FOR GOD.

When a man makes an instrument he makes it for a certain purpose ; and if it will not answer that purpose he has to cast it away. A man makes an alarm clock in order that by perpetually indicating the time it may help him in the ordering of his life, and that by striking a bell at any hour he chooses it may awaken him. If the clock either shows the wrong time or strikes at the wrong hour, or fails to work as it should, he will try to correct it by regulation and re-adjustment ; and if this fails he will cast it away, for it is failing to co-operate with him and his purpose. If a society or firm trains men and women to become its agents, educates them to understand its

plans, to represent its interests abroad and to carry out its will, and if such an agent thinks only of his own interests, seeks only his own pleasures and his own will, will not he be cast away as useless ?

God created you to be more than an instrument or an agent. He wants more than utility and obedience from you. He created you not merely for service, but for sonship. He made you for His love ; to know and love and serve Him here and to be happy with Him for ever hereafter. Other things may bring you pleasure for a time ; but very soon the pleasure fades and leaves behind it an aching void. The joy of expansion is always followed by the pain of contraction when the heart is fixed on created things apart from God. He alone can satisfy the needs of your nature, the hunger of the mind for Truth and Beauty and Goodness, the need of your will for strength, the yearning of your heart for love, the longing for rest. S. Augustine writes, " O Lord, we were made for Thee, and our heart is restless until it find its rest in Thee." To serve God here and to be His companion for ever hereafter is your destiny, the end for which He created you. Will you cast yourself away just for a few days or years of self-indulgence, self-will or self-love ? When you find it hard to abandon sin or to resist temptation, dwell on the great reward He promises you. " There shall be no curse any more : and the Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein : and His servants shall do Him service ; and they shall see His face " (Rev. xxii. 3, 4). " Fear not . . . I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward " (Gen. xl. 1).

" Behold, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse : therefore choose life that

thou mayest live, thou and thy seed : to love the Lord thy God, to obey His voice, and to cleave unto Him : for He is thy life, and the length of thy days " (Deut. xxx. 19, 20).

Since then God has created you for so high a destiny, you must resolve to concentrate every power and faculty of your nature upon the fulfilment of His Will and to subordinate all other interests to this one purpose. Pray for the spirit of detachment, or holy indifference, which will enable you to use God's creatures or to abstain from using them just in so far as they help or hinder you in doing the Will of God.

Make an Act of Self-Surrender. O my God, I am not mine own but Thine. Take me for Thine own and help me in all things to do Thy holy will. O my God, I give myself to Thee, for joy or for sorrow, for sickness or for health, for life or for death, for time or for eternity. Take me for Thine own, and help me in all things to do Thy holy will.

SUMMARY.

1. *I came from God.* God called me into being for His glory. He created me out of pure love. He made me in His own image. He upholds me every moment in being.

2. *I belong to God.* To serve Him is my one and only essential aim or end. If I serve Him, my life cannot be wasted. If I neglect to serve Him, my life must be worthless. To serve Him is my supreme business.

3. *I am destined for God.* He wills that I shall co-operate with Him in the redemption of the world. My supreme duty is to know and do His will.

MEDITATION ON THE END OF CREATURES

The other things on the face of the earth were created for man's sake, that they might help him in following out the end for which he was created.

Picture 1. The creation of the world, and of man. Hear God saying, "Let Us make man in Our image after Our likeness: and let him *have dominion* over the fish of the sea." . . . And God blessed them, and God said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and *have dominion* over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. i. 26, 28).

Picture 2. A glutton and drunkard, enslaved by food and drink. A devout communicant receiving the most holy Body and the most precious Blood of our Lord at the Altar.

Pray for the spirit of detachment and holy indifference.

CONSIDER.

1. *Non-moral.* All created things which have not free-will, and all the circumstances of man's life are non-moral, i.e. they are neither good nor bad in themselves. It depends upon the use you make of them whether they become good or bad for you. The strength of your arm, if it is used to oppress the weak, is bad. But if it is used to champion the oppressed, it is good. Riches, if they are used selfishly and harden the heart and tend to make a man independent of God, are bad. But if they are used to relieve poverty and suffering, they are good. So with fame and obscurity, health and sickness, life and death—they are indifferent or non-moral, and only receive their moral significance from the use you make of them or from the manner in which they either help or hinder you in corresponding to God's will.

2. *Creatures with dominion over man.* "God made man free, and every where he is in chains." Man may allow himself to be robbed of the freedom of his will and become enslaved to some creature or desire. The glutton and the drunkard have no dominion over food and drink. They do not use them to support their strength and to preserve their health. They use them in such a way that they destroy health and strength. Food and drink have dominion over *them*; they are their masters instead of being their servants. The miser, gloating over his money bags or banking account, does not possess his wealth: he is possessed by it. He wants to be happy, but the love of money has destroyed from his soul the capacity for happiness, the power of love. The luxurious, pampering their flesh and living only for comforts, are slaves of self-indulgence, who have lost the dominion over their lives.

3. *Man having dominion over creatures.* On the other hand, we see man with dominion over the creatures: the farmer co-operating with God to provide food; the scientist winning the dominion over electricity to provide light and force and to transmit thought; men conquering and taming the animals and training them to co-operate with them and to carry out their will; the doctor reinforcing life with his drugs, the surgeon liberating life by removing that which imperils it.

4. *Your use of creatures.* Am I the slave of any habit, passion or desire? If so, I will try to find out the reason for this captivity, which will probably fall under one of the headings given by S. John, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain-glory of life" (1 S. John ii. 16). Pleasure is right as a means to an end, as relaxation and recreation of tired faculties after strenuous

work. It is wrong when it becomes an end in itself. "She that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. v. 6). Beauty is a gift from God and ought to be enjoyed, if it leads to exaltation of soul, and the praise and worship of God. It becomes evil when it is made an end in itself, and allowed to lead to the worship of creatures rather than the Creator, or to fan the flames of lust.

My sole and supreme business is to know and love and serve God. I must only desire and use God's creatures *in so far as they help me to attain* this end for which I was created. I must hate and forsake them if they become hindrances instead of helps. Food, drink, riches, honours, health, friends and companions, a long life are blessings only in so far as they help to fit me for God's service. They become curses if they distract me from the pursuit of my supreme end: e.g. a railway train is only good *from my point of view*, if it carries me to my destination—not, if it carries me *away from it*.

Pray for the grace of entire detachment or holy indifference.

Resolve. To regard with indifference those things which the World most prizes—Riches, Honours, Pleasures: and those things which the World most fears—Poverty, Insults, and Afflictions; and to value them only *in so far* as they help you to know and love and serve God better.

SUMMARY.

1. Creatures who have no free will are non-moral, i.e. neither good nor bad in themselves.

2. God created me to have dominion over creatures. I must not allow them to have dominion over me.

3. I must be indifferent to creatures, using them only in so far as they help me to my end, and abstaining from using them if they hinder me in attaining my end.

LECTURE ON HOLY INDIFFERENCE

Since your one supreme end and purpose in life is to know and do the Will of God for you, you must try to cultivate the grace of perfect detachment or holy indifference, which will enable you to use, or abstain from using, all things as a means to your end, that is only in so far as they help or hinder you in attaining your one supreme end.

Our Lord places this grace of detachment in the forefront of His challenge to the World: "If any man willeth to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" (S. Mark viii. 34-36). If you really mean to serve God, it stands to reason that you must serve Him *in whatever manner and in whatever circumstances He wills*. You must try to attain absolute indifference as to the manner in which you may be called upon to serve Him, whether in poverty or wealth, in sickness or health, in honour or contempt, in a short life or a long life. If you find it hard to make such a resolve at first, conceive at least a desire for such a perfect detachment. It takes some time and effort to detach the will from worldliness.

But you may say, "Is not such a detachment inhuman and unnatural? Will it not kill legitimate desires and leave us callous?" No, not necessarily. There is a

distinction between holy and unholy indifference. Unholy indifference is that state which results from the death of desire or from its misdirection towards any unworthy object. The sensualist kills all holy desire by self-indulgence and becomes callous and cynical. The ambitious man starves every high and holy impulse and emotion by concentrating all the powers of his soul on an unworthy object—himself: and he becomes unsympathetic, callous, intensely cruel and selfish, indifferent to the rights and feelings of others. This is unholy indifference.

Holy indifference, or detachment, means the detachment of desire from unworthy objects, not to kill it but to concentrate it upon the one supremely worthy object, God. Holy indifference is the consecration of the lover, who detaches himself from every other thing in order that he may concentrate every desire upon the one he loves. When you pray God to help you to be indifferent to all things in His service—to poverty or wealth, sickness or health, honour or contempt, a long life or a short life, you are making a lover's vow. Indeed, the words are almost identical with our marriage vow, "I take thee . . . to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, cherish and obey till death us do part." Only we know that "neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39). So, you see, you are only trying to give to your King and your heavenly Lover just that devotion which husband and wife pledge to one another.

Again, a soldier when he consecrates himself to the service of his king does not say, "I am willing to serve you faithfully only when the conditions of your

service suit me, not if you want me to fight in an unhealthy climate or against a *very* powerful foe." A sailor does not say, in taking service under the King, "I will serve you faithfully provided you do not tell me to go to sea when it is *very* rough, or to sail to places where the sun is too hot and the climate bad for my health." The sailor and soldier, when they enlist to serve their King, do not choose *the how, or when, or where* of their service. They do their duty *wherever* they are sent, *whenever* they are called upon, whether at home or abroad, in climates healthy or unhealthy, in hardships, in battle, in life or in death. Every good soldier is eager for the post of honour, to be at the front and to be entrusted with the most perilous tasks; and yet, if the General bids him, he will remain at home and devote himself with enthusiasm to the dull task of drilling others for the work which is denied to him. If sailors and soldiers offer such a ready obedience and entire detachment to an earthly monarch, you must offer at least as much to the King of Kings, and consecrate yourself to serve Him *when and how and where* He may will to make use of you.

"But," you may say, "is it not unreal to pretend to be indifferent to things which belong to our well being, such as health, and a certain degree of wealth, and such honour as the approval and sympathy of our friends may offer us? Can we profess to be indifferent to such things as these without being insincere or wanting in right feeling?" No. Holy indifference does not demand from us any such abstract detachment from things which belong to our well being. Neither poverty nor sickness is in itself desirable. The indifference is not absolute but relative to our end, "*solely desiring and choosing those things which may better lead us to the end for which we were created.*" | Surely, it is a most reasonable principle, the

applicability of which is being illustrated in our daily experience.

1. *Indifference to sickness or health.* S. Paul was afflicted with sickness but did not allow this to hinder his work. He gloried in his infirmities (2 Cor. xii. 5). He did not desire captivity and chains; yet when "the Holy Ghost testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me," he says, "But I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 23, 24).

The German doctor in charge of the prisoners' camp at Ruhleben loved his own health more than his soul's salvation and the glory of God, and fled away at the outbreak of enteric fever.

2. *Indifference to poverty or wealth.* Love of possessions as an end in themselves robbed the rich young man of the opportunity of becoming one of our Lord's special companions and friends (S. Matt. xix. 21). The merchant who is indifferent to, or detached from, riches will not do the dishonourable thing which would increase his wealth and destroy his soul. The Missionary does not love his native land less than the man who stays at home; but his love for God makes him indifferent to his own desires and ready to go wherever God may send him.

3. *Indifference to life or death.* The priest who on three days went out between the British and German lines under heavy fire and rescued twenty wounded soldiers did not despise life or desire death. But his love for God and his men made him indifferent to life or death, if

only he might obey the impulse which God had put into his heart.

Or consider the point of indifference to a long life or a short one. Our Lord Himself was not indifferent to life and shrank from death. And yet He eagerly embraced His death at the age of thirty-three, because that death was essential to the perfecting of that sacrifice which redeemed the world, to the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of men.

David's servants, in the hour of his need when his son Absalom had risen in rebellion against him, came to the king and said, "Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall choose." "Surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, even there also will thy servant be" (2 Sam. xv. 15, 21). In the midst of a world in which the sons of God have risen in rebellion against their God and King, you will offer to our Lord a like devotion when you resolve to serve our Lord how and when and where He may require. But indifference to the manner of service would be useless unless we are also indifferent to the means of service,—resolving to use, or abstain from using, God's creatures just in so far as they help or hinder us in pursuing our end.

II. INDIFFERENCE TO CREATURES.

The skilled artisan is indifferent to the tools in his workshop, except in so far as they help him in carrying out his purposes. He does not care for their appearance or the materials of which they are made, provided they are the best to be had for his work.

The surgeon does not ask for a gold-handled knife; the author does not want a diamond-bedecked pen. A

general who asked for bayonets instead of guns because they glittered on parade, or cavalry instead of infantry without regard for the needs of war because he liked horses, would be condemned as a traitor who sacrificed the lives of men to his own whims and fancies. So will you be, if you sacrifice your soul's salvation to your love of comforts or fear of discomforts, to your love of ease or of pleasure.

What will you have lost by poverty if it helps you to save your soul? Or what will you have gained by wealth if after a few years it destroys your soul? Ask the soul in purgatory whether he has gained by luxury and ease. Dives will answer, "Warn my brethren, for I am tormented in this flame" (S. Luke xvi. 27, 28). Ask the saints in Heaven whether they regret their self-denial and mortification. They will answer with a shout of triumph, "It was worth a thousand times more suffering."

What does the glutton gain by taking more food than is necessary or good for him?—a ruined digestion and the loss even of the power to enjoy his food. What does the drunkard gain by excessive indulgence in drink? A ruined home and the loss of self-control, which means years of degrading slavery. They have used creatures as "ends" in themselves, instead of using them as means to the one end to which reason and conscience point them—the glory of God by the salvation of their souls.

Does not our Lord encourage us to aspire after this Indifference to food and drink when He warns us:—

"Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." "But seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all those things shall be added unto you" (S. Matt. vi. 25, 33).

Does He not bid us be indifferent to Poverty or Wealth when He says to us :—

“ Take heed and keep yourselves from all covetousness : for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth ” (S. Luke xii. 15).

Does He not persuade us to be indifferent to a short life or a long life when He says to us :—

“ He that loveth his life loseth it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal ” (S. John xii. 25).

And S. Paul echoes this teaching of our Lord on holy indifference when he writes :—

“ I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content ” (Phil. iv. 11). “ But godliness with contentment is great gain : for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out : but having food and covering we shall be therewith content. But they that desire to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition ” (1 Tim. vi. 6–9). “ Be ye free from the love of money ; content with such things as ye have ” (Heb. xiii. 5). “ For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord ; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord ; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s ” (Rom. xiv. 7, 8).

III. WHAT ARE THE CHIEF IMPEDIMENTS TO INDIFFERENCE ?

The chief hindrances to acquiring holy indifference, after the pleasures of sin, are :

The love of comforts,
The fear of discomforts.
The love of pleasure,
The love of power or of applause.

And here we must note that many desires which are not in themselves sinful may become so if they are indulged to excess. It is not wrong to desire to be comfortable. But if this desire is indulged in at the expense of discomfort to others, or to the detriment of your work, or to an excessive degree, it becomes what is called an "inordinate desire." Again, love of friends is one of the most precious things in life. But if it is allowed to hinder or imperil your salvation, if it distracts you from the service of God or makes you selfish towards others, then it is an inordinate or disorderly desire, one which is not ordered with a view to your end. Does not our Lord apply this test of the end even to the most sacred affection ? "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me ; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." The love of comforts and the accumulation of non-essentials rendered our army incapable of rapid movement in the South African war until Lord Kitchener came and stripped it bare of all things which were not means to the one end, that of winning the war.

The fear of discomforts will so soften a man's will that when the moment of opportunity occurs, he will shrink back from the call of duty from fear of hardships,

and will gradually become incapable of courage or of heroism. But the man who has trained himself in holy indifference will be ready to answer any call. The love of pleasure grows, from the desire for legitimate relaxation, into a craving for change and excitement. It dissipates all the force of a soul—it makes a person selfish, shallow-minded, hard-hearted, incapable of sustained effort as well as of patient endurance, and of persevering tenacity of purpose. In trying to find out and remove these impediments to Holy Indifference, ask yourself these questions :

1. What created thing affords you the greatest pleasure ?
2. What disorderly or inordinate affection enslaves you most ?
3. What hardship or difficulty do you most shrink from ?
4. What draws you most strongly away from the path of duty—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes or the vainglory of life ?
5. Is it a love of ease or pleasure or popularity ?
6. Is it the fear of sufferings or hardship or the slights and contempt of men ?
7. Are you prepared *to avoid or to embrace, to endure or to perform*, whatever you may discover in the course of these Exercises God demands of you ? Or are you placing some limits to God's grace and making it impossible for Him to help you, by being obstinately resolved not to abandon some special indulgence, or not to obey a call to some particular manner of life ?

Ask for the grace of holy indifference and the courage of entire self-surrender, so that God may help you to the utmost to know and do His holy Will.

S. Paul, knowing that the love of comforts and the fear of hardships and suffering make the will soft and unnerve it for patient endurance and courageous activity, constantly appeals to us to strengthen and harden ourselves in holy indifference, as a soldier on active service must if he would do his duty faithfully. He writes to Timothy:

“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who enrolled him as a soldier. I suffer hardships unto bonds, as a malefactor ; but the Word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Faithful is the saying : For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him : if we endure, we shall also reign with Him : if we shall deny Him, He will deny us ” (2 Tim. ii. 3, 4, 9–11).*

He reminds his converts that they must concentrate every faculty on the one aim, the glory of God, by the one means, viz. the salvation of their souls. For him the Christian life is not a slack and slothful floating on a sunlit stream, but a strenuous race, a vigorous conflict for which every power of man’s nature must be trained and disciplined if the end is to be attained and the crown won.

“ Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize ? Even so run, that ye may attain. And every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things. Now they do it

to receive a corruptible crown ; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, as not uncertainly ; so fight I, as not beating the air : but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage : lest, by any means, after I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected " (1 Cor. ix. 24-26).

Therefore resolve that you will not offer to God a half-hearted service, but will desire and strive to attain that holy indifference which will set you free to love and serve Him with all your heart and all your mind, with all your soul and all your strength.

MEDITATION ON THE TWO WAYS

Read S. Matt. vii. 13, 14. Picture. Your soul standing at the parting of the Ways.

To the Left—*The Broad Way.* Satan, in clever disguise, gaily dressed, adorned with jewels, fascinating manners, beckoning to your soul. The Broad Way leads gently *down*, through tropical verdure, to a garden where women sport round a sparkling fountain, amidst luxury, food, drink, softness, wealth. Crowds of lads and girls are thronging this way.

To the Right—*The Narrow Way.* Jesus, clothed in garments stained in blood, wounded but victorious, beckons with pierced Hand to your soul. The Narrow Way leads *uphill*, is covered with brambles, and rough with stones and rocks. The track is marked by many blood-stained footprints ; and a few persons are painfully climbing.

Ask for light to see *the end* to which these Ways lead, and for courage to start on the Narrow Way.

One of the greatest perils in life, which makes ship-

wreck of countless souls, is the peril of aimlessness. A life which is adrift without any strong and holy controlling purpose to guide and direct it is a danger to itself and to others. During a violent storm in Portsmouth, a battleship broke loose from its moorings and, carried down by the tide and swept hither and thither by the wind, it wrecked or sunk ship after ship. That which had been a shield and protection to the merchant vessels now destroyed them, because it was adrift without any guidance or control.

So will it be with you. Your life may become a tragedy of aimlessness and a peril to all around you, if you allow it to drift without the guidance and control of a strong and holy purpose. While, if you remember the end for which God created you—to know and love and serve Him here and be happy with Him for ever hereafter—and consecrate yourself entirely to this end, you will enrich the world with a noble life and bring many blessings to those you love, as well as to others.

CONSIDER—THREE CLASSES OF MEN.

1. *Fools*. Those who are “going nowhere,” who have no holy purpose in life, no thoughtful plan, floating on the sunlit surface of the sea of life. These slowly but surely *drift to Hell*, drawn by the currents of bad example, low public opinion, and interior forces of decay. Man has no strength *in himself* to redeem himself.

2. *Waverers*. Double-minded, half-hearted men, unstable (S. James i. 8), always *arguing* with, instead of *obeying*, conscience, and tampering with temptation; gazing now at God, now at the pleasures of sin, not sinning deliberately, but *not avoiding occasions of sin*. Waverers are swept away by temptation, when off their guard, or by some sudden assault.

3. *Wise men.* The wise man *looks at the end* of the Two Ways, the increased pace of downward movement, the precipice, the swamp, the City of Destruction ; also at the glory of the mountain-tops of the City of Peace. He resolves to adopt the *best* means—not inferior means ; and *all* the means—not merely *some* of them—which will lead him to that end.

To which class do you belong ?

ANIMA CHRISTI

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inflame me.

Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesu, hear me.

Within Thy wounds hide me.

Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.

From the malicious enemy defend me.

In the hour of my death call me

And bid me come to Thee.

That with Thy saints I may praise Thee

For ever and ever.

Amen.

PARAPHRASE OF ANIMA CHRISTI

Soul of Jesus, make me whole,
Meek and contrite make my soul ;
Thou most stainless Soul Divine,
Cleanse this sordid soul of mine.
Hallow this my contrite heart,
Purify my every part :
Soul of Jesus, hallow me,
Miserere Domine.

Save me, Body of my Lord,
Save a sinner, vile, abhorred ;
Sacred Body, wan and worn,
Bruised and mangled, scourged
and torn ;
Pierced Hands, and Feet and Side,
Rent, insulted, crucified :
Save me—to the Cross I flee,
Miserere Domine.

Blood of Jesus, stream of life,
Sacred stream with blessing rife,
From Thy broken Body shed
On the Cross, that Altar dread ;
Given to be our Drink Divine,
Fill my heart and make it Thine ;
Blood of Christ, my succour be,
Miserere Domine.

Holy water, stream that poured
From Thy riven side, O Lord,
Wash Thou me, without, within,
Cleanse me from the taint of sin,

Till my soul is clean and white,
Bathed, and purified, and bright
As a ransomed soul should be—
Miserere Domine.

Jesu, by the wondrous power
Of Thine awful Passion hour ;
By the unimagined woe
Mortal man can never know.
By the curse upon Thee laid,
By the ransom Thou hast paid,
By Thy Passion comfort me—
Miserere Domine.

Jesu, by Thy bitter death,
By Thy last expiring breath,
Give me the eternal life
Purchased by that mortal strife ;
Thou didst suffer death that I
Might not die eternally ;
By Thy dying quicken me—
Miserere Domine.

Mercy, mercy, let me be
Never parted, Lord, from Thee ;
When the hour of death is near,
And my spirit faints for fear,
Call me with Thy voice of love,
Place me near to Thee above,
With Thine Angel host to raise
An undying song of praise. Amen

THE PURGATIVE WAY

MEDITATION ON SIN PUNISHED IN THE REBEL ANGELS

Pray for grace to consecrate to God's glory and service every faculty and power of heart and mind and will.

Read Rev. xii. 7-12. *Picture* Heaven, perfect love, beauty, holiness. The vision of God. The splendour of the angels, each reflecting some ray of God's perfection. What flash of colour! What joyous harmony of sacred song! Suddenly—a jarring note, a discord—see, in one angel the light of God is no longer reflected. Satan has sinned, and has lost God for ever!

CONSIDER.

1. *The perfection of the angels.* A free-will, an unclouded mind, a pure heart; the whole nature offered up freely every moment to God's service, for His glory. Heaven is *perfect union* with God in heart and mind and will.

2. *The sin of the angels.* Dazzled by their own perfection, intoxicated by the sense of power, they allowed pride to enter their hearts. The mind turned from God to gaze at self, the will set itself up in opposition to God, the heart turned to self-love.

3. *The punishment of the angels.* They lose God. This *is Hell*. To grow blind to the vision of God and deaf to His voice *is Hell*. To be independent of God, to have unrestrained self-will and self-love, to be self-centred, isolated, alone, *is Hell*. The mind collapses into anarchy,

the will hardens into eternal antagonism to good (i.e. God), the heart gnaws and feeds upon itself. Separation from God is *Hell*.

4. *Spiritual sins*. The sin of the Angels should remind you that the most lofty spiritual privileges will not shield you from temptation, or allow you to be off your guard. You as a communicant or a priest or a Religious may be in constant and intimate communion with God, and yet may be cast away! Satan stood in His Presence. Judas lived with the Son of God in most intimate intercourse!

Remember that spiritual sins, such as falsehood, pride, envy, jealousy, anger, self-love, and self-will, though they may not be condemned by Society, are especially offensive to God and a more grievous insult to His majesty even than sensual sins. For sins of the body may be mainly bestial. But sins of the spirit are *devilish*; they defile the inner sanctuary of man's being and distort God's image in your soul. Our Lord especially warns the Pharisees, the professedly religious people of that time, that the publicans and harlots would go into the Kingdom of God before them. Falsehood, Pride and Jealousy unite your heart and mind and will with the heart and mind and will of Satan.

5. *One sin of Pride and Jealousy* cast the rebel angels out of Heaven. How often have you deserved to be cast away? Your pride which makes you contemptuous of others and so often censorious; your jealousy which cannot bear to see others succeed, or to hear others praised; your self-love which cannot bear obscurity and your self-will which cannot tolerate a contradiction!

6. *A sin of Scandal*. The sin of one angel dragged many down in its train (Rev. xii. 9). You—a com-

municant or a priest or a Religious : sinful souls looked up to you as holy, hoped that your holiness would help them to withstand temptation ; and the chill of despair freezes them when they find in you the same sins (in more subtle form) as those which are destroying them. Perishing souls looked to you for pity, and they found only pride. What has been the influence of your example on your companions at school, at college or at work ? When innocent souls trusted you without doubting, have you led them astray, or kindled in them a spark of those flames which may never be quenched ?

MAKE ACTS OF

1. *Hatred of sin*, and anxiety to avoid it. "Flee from sin as from the face of a serpent" (Ecclus. xxi. 2).

2. *Grieve for sin*. Time after time, by nourishing an evil thought of pride, envy, jealousy, or brooding anger, you have deserved Hell, and allowed it to awaken within you.

3. *Thank God* for His infinite mercy and long-suffering patience. How often has He quenched those flames which you have kindled ! How much He loves you !

First resolve. To avoid and detest sin with an intense horror in its first beginnings in the mind. Regard with loathing the first movement of consent to an evil thought. It is so easy to crush a serpent's egg ; it is so hard to kill the serpent when it has hatched out and grown and wound its coils round your will. "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet. ii. 4), what will be His judgment

upon you, whom He has surrounded with so many warnings, so many pleadings ?

Second resolve. God has pardoned you, in spite of your repeated sin, for the sake of Jesus Christ. He has given you time for repentance. He encourages you to try again. How patient and forbearing and long-suffering He has been with you, out of the great love He feels for you ! Pour out your heart before Him in hatred for your sin and in sorrow that you have so often grieved Him, in wonder at His patience, and in strong resolve to forsake sin in the days to come.

SUMMARY.

1. The Angels were perfect. But, yielding to Pride and Selfishness, they were cast out of Heaven.

2. Spiritual sins are in many cases more offensive to God even than carnal sins. The latter are bestial ; but spiritual sins are devilish. Falsehood, Pride and Jealousy unite your mind to the mind and will of Satan.

3. My sins help to drag others down. I must loathe and hate sin, and resolve utterly to forsake it.

LECTURE ON TEMPTATION

Read S. James i. 12-16 ; S. Luke iv. 1-13 ; xxii. 31, 32, 40-46.

TEMPTATION IS NOT SIN.

It is most important to remember that temptation is not sin. It is so far from being sin that storms of temptation are often the mark of advance in holiness. Temptation is the trial or testing of the will, and without it the will cannot grow strong. Just as the muscles of the body can only grow strong by exercise and by feeling the

strain, so the will can only grow strong by exercise, by constantly making choices between good and evil.

An evil thought does not become sin until you have consented to it, allowed it a place in your mind and taken pleasure in dwelling on it. Until you consent to it, the evil thought belongs to the devil who suggested it, and is not yours. But if you consent to it, then it becomes your own, and bears the stamp or hall-mark of your will. Satan has the power to suggest evil thoughts to the holiest mind, as he did to Christ Himself. And as you draw nearer to God, you must be prepared to meet more violent storms of temptation.

RULES FOR DEALING WITH TEMPTATION.

1. *Remember your twofold nature.* You are not an angel—i.e. pure spirit. You are a human being—a spiritual being incarnate in a body. If you choose to ignore God's will for your body by wilfully neglecting the laws of health, indulging or weakening it by excessive or insufficient food, drink, exercise or sleep, you create an unwholesome condition of the body which reacts harmfully on the soul. The glutton, drunkard and slothful persons do the devil's work for him, and make the body a prison for the soul. Those who are unwise in their asceticism or unrestrained in their activity produce a physical or mental exhaustion which breeds much needless torment, irritability, fussiness, excessive anxiety. Christian asceticism aims at making the body a disciplined and responsive instrument of the soul. Do not attribute to Satan what is due to your own foolishness or fussiness, or to your refusal to obey God's laws of health. The sins of good people come chiefly from exhaustion.

2. *See the end and avoid the beginning.* Many persons

love to tamper with the thought of sin who would shrink with horror from the sinful act. See the end, and you will avoid the beginning. A harlot's life begins with a foul thought cherished. The stab of a murderer begins in an angry thought indulged. A drunkard's ruined home begins in self-indulgence.

3. *Guard the thoughts and eyes.* The eyes are the gateway to the soul, through which the world rushes in, and the soul rushes out to dissipate its energies in gazing. Through reading, the eyes allow the lives of millions of men, not only in our own but in every age, to influence your life. Through the eyes beauty makes its appeal, and either inflames the soul to the praise of God, or kindles in it the flames of lust and evil curiosity. Our Lord warns us to take stern measures with ourselves, if gazing leads to evil. "If thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out; it is good for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell" (S. Mark ix. 47). Eyes and ears provide material on which the mind can brood. Thoughts left to themselves without guidance or control often become a whirlpool turning round and round a single point which obsesses the mind, and from which it is difficult to break away. Our Lord bids us guard our thoughts, "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings" (S. Matt. xvi. 19).

4. *Do not look at temptation.* For temptation mesmerizes, bewilders, fascinates the will, and robs it of its freedom. Look *past* temptation to what lies beyond—sin or victory, Heaven or Hell. This was our Lord's method—"who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising shame" (Heb. xii. 2).

5. *Avoid occasions of sin.* Occasions of sin are things which are not in themselves sinful, but are *for you* a source of peril. An occasion of sin is "any person, place or thing which leads you away from God." The sincerity of your repentance and resolves can generally be tested by the strictness and zeal with which you "cut off," as our Lord bids you to do, *the occasion of sin*, whether it be a friend who is as intimate with you as your "hand," or a place or thing as necessary to your comfort as your "foot." If, *against your will*, you are placed in the midst of temptations and occasions of sin which you cannot avoid, the sense of God's Presence will be your sure protection.

6. *Remember the cost of sin.* The pleasures of sin must be paid for. Christ saves from the guilt of sin and from its eternal consequences: but God does not remove the temporal consequences. As a dislocated arm must be pulled back into its socket with great pain, so a dislocated soul must suffer in being restored to health. Every thought or word or deed of sin is a dislocation of your will from its harmony with the will of God, and will bring inevitable suffering here, or hereafter in Purgatory, even if it does not destroy the soul. The pain of self-denial is great, but the pain of self-indulgence is greater: just as in the end the joys of virtue are infinitely greater than the pleasures of vice.

7. *Attention and distraction.* Temptation when powerful mesmerizes the mind and will, and keeps them fixed on the evil thing. It rivets the attention. This spell which fascinates you and robs your will of its freedom must be broken by distraction, by making the sign of the holy Cross with real devotion,—the Cross which shattered Satan's power,—and energetically devoting all

your powers to some hard task. It is the vacant heart, "empty, swept, and garnished" (S. Luke xi. 25) into which devils find an easy entrance. The idle man tempts the Devil.

EXAMINE YOURSELF carefully as to these points :—

1. What are your chief temptations in *thought*? Are you tempted to vain, idle, frivolous, silly thoughts—unclean thoughts—proud, conceited, censorious or contemptuous thoughts of others—angry, unkind, sarcastic, hard thoughts?

Meditate on the Crown of Thorns: and ask Jesus by His patient wearing of the crown of thorns to help you to control your thoughts. Say the Collect for Purity at the beginning of the Holy Communion Service.

2. What are your chief temptations in *word*? Are you tempted to idle, careless, thoughtless, frivolous words—to unkind gossip or uncharitable judgments, untruthful, insincere, or exaggerated words, to angry, quarrelsome, irritating words—to excessive, unrestrained, foolish, worthless chatter? What are to you the chief occasions of sin, when you are betrayed into careless or sinful speech? Adore Jesus as the Word of God—Meditate on His priceless words and His frequent silences—and ask Him to give you the grace of silence, and the control of speech.

3. What are your chief temptations in *deed*? Are you tempted to thoughtless, careless, impulsive actions—to impure or indecent actions—to selfish or unjust, deceitful, dishonest or cruel deeds? In whose company or in what places, or in what circumstances, do you most frequently fall? What are your besetting sins?

Meditate on the Pierced Hands and Feet of Jesus nailed to the Cross; and pray that you may have the

courage to be willing to be "crucified with Christ" so that a holy restraint may control your thoughts and words and deeds.

Make a generous resolve gladly to endure any and every hardship in following Jesus on the Narrow Way.

MEDITATION ON THE SIN OF ADAM AND EVE

Read Genesis iii. 1-21. *Picture.* See the Garden of Eden—the beauty and harmony of all creation—Adam and Eve rejoicing in their dominion over nature—the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eve gazing with curiosity at the forbidden fruit. The serpent approaching silently, subtly. *Hear.* The serpent asking, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" . . . "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil." *Pray.* For conviction of sin and for true and deep contrition.

CONSIDER. In this sacred allegory we are taught how sin first entered into the world, and how it awakens in each soul.

1. *Contempt for God.* Truly rational beings do not doubt God's existence. Their sin is to treat Him as one who does not matter, one who can be disregarded with impunity. Adam heard God's voice, knew God's will and remembered God's full warning. But he listened to *another* voice, chose his *own* will, and despised God's warning as not *sure* and certain. So you hear God's voice in your conscience and in the commands of the Church. You know His will and remember His warning, "shall surely die." But have you not often played with

temptation, nourished an evil thought suggested by Satan, lingered in, or near, some occasion of sin? Have you failed to give to God's voice in conscience that immediate, unhesitating obedience which is due to His majesty? Have you not willingly entered on that discussion in which Satan always blinds the mind of those whom he tempts, which encourages doubts as to the validity of the moral law, and leads you to presume on God's mercy? Almost every sin begins in Godlessness.

2. *Evil curiosity.* "A tree to be desired to make one wise" (ver. 6). The pride of being "knowing," the reputation of being "a man of the world," the fear of being regarded as "an innocent," the intense drawing to know the secrets and mysteries of evil out of mere curiosity, the pride of intellect, the consciousness of being superior to others in knowledge—all these lead men to desire just to taste of the forbidden fruit. The impatience of restraint, the desire "to do as I like," the false philosophy which bids us follow our instincts, and tells me that I shall only realize myself by satisfying my every desire, lead to a wish to be independent of God.

Have you tolerated, even brooded over, thoughts in your mind which would make you blush with shame if they were proclaimed aloud to your friends? Have you out of mere curiosity sought for knowledge of evil which was in no way necessary to the fulfilment of your duty?

3. *Infidelity.* "Shall not surely die" (ver. 4). Infidelity lies not in the intellectual, but in the moral, sphere. To be unfaithful to the truth you know, to be disloyal to your highest inspirations, to be disobedient to the judgment of your conscience, will surely blind you to God and open your eyes to evil. Sin is as automatic or self-acting in the soul as disease is in the body. Every thought of evil indulged deadens (that is, "surely kills")

some wholesome power of the mind ; every thought, or word, or deed, of lust to which one consents or in which one takes pleasure, kills out some of the capacity of the heart for love.

Have you taken up the wrong attitude towards God, the pride and vanity which refuses to learn, the self-sufficiency which desires to be independent of God ? The mind full of self-love breeds doubt.

4. *Sensuality*. “ The woman saw that the tree was good for food and a delight to the eyes ” (ver. 6). The roots of those sins of which the temptation comes to us through the world are, “ the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life ” (1 S. John ii. 16). The desire for the beauty of outward form, apart from its moral and spiritual significance, unrestrained gazing, the touch and taste and love of softness, the pleasures of sin—these all inflame passion, and break down the resistance of the will. The guardianship of the eyes is the first duty of the spiritual life ; for the eyes are the chief gateway to the palace of your soul, through which the world, with all its defilement and infection of evil, rushes in, and through which all the powers of your soul pour out and become dissipated. The careless reading of something evil out of curiosity may in two minutes kindle a flame which it will take years to quench.

5. *Your personal sins*. How far have you associated yourself with those spiritual forces of Pride, Sensuality, and Love of Pleasure which are in rebellion against God ? Think of all the consequences of sin,—the diseases, quarrels, wars, cruelty, oppression, anger, tears, crimes,—the deforming of bodies, the destruction of souls—the loss of innocence, of peace and happiness, the misery and despair of sinful souls—the groans of souls in Hell.

Remember that when you have sinned, you have strengthened the power of Satan in the world. Satan has no power in the world, except in so far as he can find entrance into the will of man. If Eve had not sinned, if Adam had not disobeyed, Satan would have had no foothold in the world. When you sin, you strengthen Satan's power, and weaken the forces of God in the world. When you sin, Christ is looking at you from the Cross, and His Wounds bleed afresh.

Make Acts of Contrition and Confession and of Detestation of Sin.

Resolve. To forsake utterly every occasion of sin—i.e. every person, place or thing which draws you away from God.

SUMMARY.

1. Eve's curiosity and desire led her to tamper with her conscience, and to doubt the certain penalty of sin.

2. Her disobedience dragged Adam down and ruined the human race by bringing sin into the world.

3. Disregard of God's commandment, unrestrained gazing, inordinate curiosity, trifling with conscience, sensuality led them to rebel against God. How far am I yielding to the same impulses and passions?

I must resolve to hate sin and to forsake and avoid every occasion of sin.

LECTURE ON PRIDE AND SENSUALITY

1. *The root of sin.* There is one root of all sin. It is *Self*. It branches out into many forms: self-love, self-will, self-indulgence, self-satisfaction, self-sufficiency, etc. But we can trace them all back to the attempt of the

creature *to be independent of the Creator*—in other words, to Godlessness and Selfishness.

2. *The two branches.* This one root divides into two branches: (a) Pride, (b) Sensuality.

Pride is *self-assertion*: Sensuality is *self-indulgence*.

3. *Pride is self-assertion.* First as against God, demanding independence, refusing obedience, desiring to erect one's will into an *independent* centre of initiative and originality (e.g. rebel angels, Adam, Prodigal Son). "It is the beginning of pride when a man departeth from the Lord; and his heart is departed from Him that made him. For the beginning of pride is sin; and he that keepeth it will pour forth abomination" (Ecclus. x. 12). Pride breeds vainglory, the love of display, *covetousness*, the desire for riches, *ambition*, the lust of power, anger, envy, detraction, hatred, contempt for one's neighbour, boastfulness, presumption, stubbornness, ingratitude, disobedience and a spirit of insubordination. It shows itself in an undue *self-consciousness*, sensitiveness, touchiness, readiness to take offence, a disposition to brood over and magnify trifling incidents, readiness to detect and point out faults in others, love of prominence and fame. Pride does not send a soul to Hell. *It awakens Hell in the soul.* The sin is *its own* punishment. The mind and heart, full of malice and envy and pride, already feel the gnawing of the worm.

4. *Examine yourself on Pride.*

i. In all your actions, do you aim solely at God's glory, or have you sought your own glory in them?

ii. Do you speak often of yourself and of your doings? Do you try to turn the conversation on to those lines?

- iii. Do you love positions of distinction or fame ?
- iv. Are you impatient at obscurity or lowly employment ?
- v. Are you over-sensitive and angry when ignored or snubbed or insulted ?
- vi. Do you look with contempt on others ? Are you quick to notice and remark on their weaknesses ? Make acts of self-abhorrence and humility.

Pride is most offensive to God, for it is direct rebellion against His rule and an insult to His majesty. Pride in your heart arrays all the power of God against you. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (James iv. 6). "He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart" (S. Luke i. 51). "Pride is hateful before the Lord and before men" (Eccclus. x. 7).

And is not pride a dishonesty ? Is it not claiming for your own what really belongs to another ? For you did not make yourself. All that you have and are belong to God. Your talents—God gave them to you. Your beauty—you inherited its form ; and you rob it of its spiritual power and make it repulsive by your vanity. Your strength—in ten years' time it will have lost its splendour ; and even now it cannot be compared with the strength of an animal. In so short a time you will be dust and worms ; why then strut about with so much confidence ? If you wish to hear people praising you, you must certainly wish them to know the whole truth ; so you should proclaim aloud in public all your secret sins of thought and word and deed. If you are not willing to do this, it is obvious that you are seeking praise and enjoying admiration under false pretences. What gain has Pride been to you ? It only makes you

either offensive or ridiculous. It exposes you at every turn to wounds and quarrels, and it entirely perverts your judgment. A proud man is like one who walks about blind, or as one without a skin. Everything may touch him on the raw. Consider Haman in Esther v. High and uplifted, swollen with pride at the royal invitation, "he went forth that day joyful and glad of heart." But any beggarly Jew had the power to rob him of his joy and wound him. "When Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up nor moved for him, he was filled with wrath" (ver. 9). Pride exposed him to ceaseless wounds and also perverted his judgment. "To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?" (vi. 6). He was wrong. The king was not thinking of him at all, and his fall was as great as his pride. While he dreamed of the admiration and applause of the multitude, he awakened to suffer its contempt and derision.

And why should you be so touchy at the slightest insult? Why so indignant at the least injustice? Is it really strict justice you desire? Then you deserve Hell for your first mortal sin. It is only of God's infinite mercy, not of strict justice, that you are still tolerated on this earth. Why then so touchy and sensitive, so ready to take offence, so easily cast down by a slight or insult, so angry and depressed when others treat you with the contempt which you know you deserve?

Resolve 1. Not to think of, or to speak of, or to do anything which could possibly bring honour and glory to yourself, or (except when duty obliges you) disgrace or shame to others.

Resolve 2. To humble yourself and break your pride by a good confession.

NOTE ON SENSUALITY.

1. *Sensuality* is the desire for those unlawful pleasures which affect us through the senses, such as gluttony, drunkenness, sloth, impurity, idleness, evil curiosity, softness, luxury.

2. *Man was created* to reign over this world as God's vice-regent, i.e. to *subdue* the earth and to *have dominion* over the animals. But when he yields to sensuality, he falls from his throne and sinks below the creatures, who thus get *dominion over him*. Man's nature is not single but twofold. He is not a purely spiritual being as are angels. He is a union of body and soul which interpenetrate and react upon one another. In the higher regions of his soul which we call spirit, he is in touch with God, and feels divine impulses and attractions. In the region of his body, he is in touch with the material world and feels the animal impulses, instincts, emotions, appetites and passions which he has inherited from the brute creation. These passions are not evil in themselves. They only become evil when they are misdirected or uncontrolled.

The senses bring the soul into contact with the material universe which stimulates it into activity. They are perpetually bringing to the soul the material for thought, and the stimulation of feeling. These sensations of the external universe either attract us or repel: they awaken either desire or fear. Desire begins with perception. The mind then passes judgment on what it perceives as either desirable or undesirable. Then the heart feels either drawn to it or repelled from it, loves or loathes it. Lastly, the will desires either to experience and possess it or to avoid it. So desire may pass through three stages—mental, emotional and volitional. We have

then to guard our senses, our thoughts, our heart and our will. If we keep no guard on our senses, the external world may so attract and absorb us that all the soul's powers will be dissipated in gazing and hearing. The World instead of God will become the real centre of our life ; and the exhausted, dissipated soul will always be craving for new sensations.

So the Psalmist cries, "Turn away my eyes lest they behold vanity and quicken Thou me in Thy way" (Ps. cxix. 37). Through the eye temptation first entered into the soul of man, when Eve, gazing on the forbidden fruit, saw that "it was good for food and pleasant to the eyes" (Gen. iii. 6). And this is a timeless allegory. It is the same for you as it was for her. The wandering eye dissipates the powers of the soul in gazing. "Wisdom is before the face of him that hath understanding : but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth" (Prov. xvii. 24). And this craving for new sensations can never bring satisfaction to an immortal soul created for the things of eternity. "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again" (S. John iv. 13). "The eyes of man are never satisfied" (Prov. xxvii. 20). "All things are full of weariness . . . the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Eccles. i. 8). Our Lord teaches us, "If thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast it from thee : it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than have two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire" (S. Matt. xviii. 9).

He repeats the same solemn warning with regard to the sense of touch—the "hand" : and the wandering into occasions of sin—the "foot." For it is through the senses that disorderly affections are only too often awakened which may grow into destructive passions. Is

all appreciation of beauty then forbidden to the Christian? No—far from it: God reveals Himself in the Good, the Beautiful, and the True: and beauty should awaken the soul to the praise of God. But if instead of this it kindles flames of passion and of lust, then you must courageously pluck out the eye which imperils your soul. For the man who is enslaved by lust and passion, and whose imagination is haunted with thoughts of sinful indulgence has awakened Hell within him, and cannot know the peace of God.

But without falling into sins of act, a person may so yield himself up to luxury, love of comforts and fear of discomfort, that he becomes a miserable slave of sensuality and his body the prison or tomb of his soul. From this excessive indulgence of the body, spring the three forms of sloth described below.

Sloth lies at the root of a vast amount of bodily and spiritual sickness, and is the besetting sin of many people.

(a) *Bodily sloth.* Over-indulgence in food, the pampering of the body, the over-anxious avoidance of discomforts, the refusal to bear pain and to “endure hardness,” excess of sleep, relaxation in arm-chairs, refusal of exertion, complaints about weather and little trivial matters of health, concentrate the attention on self and unnerve the will.

(b) *Mental sloth.* The refusal of the demand for serious thought and real effort of the mind, the tendency to read only what is easy, feeding the mind on trivialities, dawdling over newspapers, love of gossip, failure to study painfully some worthy subject, allowing thoughts to wander without restraint, or to brood on what is unwholesome—all these *destroy* the glorious faculties of the mind, drug the soul,

and lead to the refusal to wear our "crown of thorns."

(c) *Spiritual sloth.* When the body is unstrung and the brain has lost its spring, sloth then destroys the soul. Inattention at prayer, failure to meditate, unpunctuality at Divine Service, weariness of spiritual exercises, lead eventually to dimness of Faith, withering of Hope, coldness of Love.

Examine yourself. Am I each day concentrating all my powers vigorously on my one end, the Glory of God? Am I training myself to endure hardness, to despise softness and luxury, to ignore discomforts, to suffer patiently, to discipline my body, to concentrate my mind on the service of God and the unseen and eternal Realities of Life?

MEDITATION ON HELL

Picture. A Soul alive, *alone* for ever in infinite space from which heaven and earth have fled away—Absolute *isolation*, utter solitude which vibrates wearily with two words, "Too late!" "Never more!"

Read S. Mark ix. 42-48. If thine hand or foot or eye cause thee to stumble, cut it off, pluck it out; "it is good for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye rather than having two eyes to be cast into Hell; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

1. "*The wages of sin is death*"—i.e. the death of the soul. Every sin indulged destroys something of one's capacity for God. The Devil's supreme deception is to introduce doubt into the soul as to the certainty and finality of moral issues. When God says "Ye shall surely die," the Devil whispers "Ye shall *not surely* die."

Your soul is too ready to listen to the Devil's lie that "God is kind and good. It will all come right in the end." God Himself has warned you to beware of "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched."

2. *All sin is selfishness.* Selfishness when it is perfectly fulfilled is Isolation. *Isolation is Hell.* The soul reaps what it has sown; God has disappeared from it; it is no longer troubled by the sting of conscience; there is no one to restrain it—to contradict it. It can now "have its own way." It is *perfectly* independent and self-sufficient. It feeds upon itself. No conflicting claims cross its self-love. Oh! the horror of the great Silence, the torment of eternal Loneliness, the eternal outer Darkness. Every time I have been selfish, *I have deserved Hell.*

3. *Sin awakens Hell in the Soul.* Sin, like an acid, eats out the capacity for Love. Love is Heaven. Inability to love is Hell. Sin destroys the faculties of the soul; it blinds the eye and deafens the ear⁷ of the soul. It is the loss of the Vision and the Voice of God. When it is fulfilled, it has destroyed the capacity of the Soul to correspond with its environment—God. Hell is self-destruction, *the eternal loss of God.*

4. *The Worm which dieth not* is the undying remorse of a soul which can *never forget what it might have been*; the eternal echo of "Too late," "Never more"—the eternal "*lost opportunity.*"

5. *The Fire which is not quenched* is the eternal craving of desires which sin has awakened and which can never be satisfied. Each choice of evil hardens the will against God. Each refusal to obey conscience deadens the soul. Hell is self-created, the irrevocably fixed antagonism of the will against Good and against God.

N.B.—*Never* apply the thought of Hell to *anyone but yourself*.

From the unknown agonies
Of the soul that helpless lies,
From the worm that never dies,
Save us, Holy Jesu.

From the lusts that none can tame,
From the fierce mysterious flame,
From the everlasting shame,
Save us, Holy Jesu.

6. *Hatred of Sin.* Picture a broken-down drunkard, a harlot on the streets, a murderer on the scaffold. Each self-indulgence, each impure thought, each thought of anger, envy or jealousy would have brought you to this awful end, if it had been allowed to work itself out in your life. God's infinite and undeserved pity *alone* has saved you from the full consequences of even only one evil thought indulged. How *can* you be *proud* when God's long-suffering patience *alone* has saved you from the fate you deserved for one wilful sin of thought? How *can* you resent little slights and insults, when you deserve to be God-forsaken, an outcast, despised by men and angels?

7. *You have deserved Hell.* Whenever, knowing good, you have deliberately chosen evil, whenever you have deliberately disobeyed the voice of God in conscience, or in some grave matter set up your will in rebellion against the will of God, you have deserved Hell. Stern justice would have blotted you out, left you to yourself. If God had withdrawn from your soul your whole nature would have collapsed into utter corruption. How *can* you be proud, when you exist only by God's infinite pity? How *can* you desire to be honoured, praised, and preferred to others, when, but for God's pity, you would be gnawing your soul in Hell?

Meditation on Hell should excite in you these feelings and resolves :

i. To hate and abhor the first thought of evil when it *first* touches the mind. Resolve : to avoid with horror *every occasion of sin*.

ii. To adore with ceaseless gratitude the patience and love of God, and Jesus Christ dying on the Cross, who *alone* saves you from Hell. Resolve : to make gratitude to God the supreme passion of your life and the glory of God the one purpose of each day.

iii. To despise yourself as having often deserved Hell. Resolve : to bear patiently and cheerfully every insult and affliction which comes to you, as being *far less* than you deserve.

SUMMARY.

1. Sin destroys in my soul the capacity for God.
2. Sin awakens Hell in my soul. For sin is Selfishness.
3. Heaven is Love and Fellowship. Hell is Selfishness and Isolation.
4. The " worm " is undying remorse. The " fires " are unquenchable lusts.
5. I must hate sin and love my Saviour, who on the Cross bore the penalty of my sin and set me free.

LECTURE ON MORTIFICATION

Your one end in life is the Glory of God. If you love the *end*, you must learn to *love the means* which alone can bring you to the end. The chief root of sin is Selfishness. The way to *uproot it* is Self-denial. This is the means which our Lord appointed for all His

followers: "If any man willeth to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever willeth to save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" (S. Mark viii. 34). A false philosophy bids you strive after self-realization by self-indulgence. It tells you that you can only live your life to its fullness by following each impulse and desire as it awakens within you. This might be true if human nature were not fallen. But human nature *is* fallen; and in each one of us there is a tendency to evil which leads us away from God. Our Lord meets this by laying down these three Laws of Eternal life, that:—

- (1) Self-indulgence is the certainty of self-destruction.
- (2) Self-denial is the only way to self-control.
- (3) Self-sacrifice is the only way to self-realization.

Remember. The awful words of warning about Hell were not spoken by some stern fanatic. They are not the utterance merely of one of the Apostles. They are the words of the Son of God, the King of Love, who loved you as no one else can love you, who died to save you from Sin and Hell. It is not true love which refuses to echo these awful warnings of our dear Redeemer. It is often a weak and contemptible sentiment, a selfish desire to escape from what is painful, which makes some teachers silent on the subject of Hell. They have not the courage to be stern, and so souls are lost. Which of these two men really loves your life—the surgeon who, when mortification has set in, has the courage to tell you, "You must allow me to amputate that hand or foot, or you will die"; or the sentimentalist who says, "I

cannot bear to think of you maimed for life. We will apply bandages, and administer sleeping draughts which will enable you to forget the pain. Perhaps it will all come right in the end." Does not that surgeon love you best who strikes deep and strong, unmoved by, and indifferent to, the pain he causes you, if only he can remove the cause of certain death, and liberate your life? So you must learn to hate that moral infidelity which ruins countless souls by saying, "It will all come right in the end." Is not this to echo the Devil's first and most skilful lie, "Ye shall not surely die"? God says, "Ye shall surely die." As sure as the law of gravitation, as certain as the movement of the stars, so sure it is that sin destroys the soul here and now, and, if persisted in, must end in Hell. God died upon the Cross to save you *from* your sin. But God Himself cannot save you *in* your sin. Mortification must discipline both the body and soul. It will take the form of Fasting, Humiliation, and Obedience.

1. *Fasting.* The athlete when training suffers gladly those denials and restraints which develop his body to the perfection of strength. Every passion in man's nature is good in itself. It is *only* evil, when unrestrained or misdirected. Man's nature is fallen or disordered and needs discipline. Passions are always trying to overthrow the supremacy of the will. Therefore it is necessary to strengthen the will and to subdue desire by constantly exercising severe self-restraint in such matters as food, drink, sleep, and comforts. Fasting alone secures perfect self-control.

In our fallen nature we find two tendencies which have to be corrected, viz. disorderly affections and inordinate desire. Disorderly affection is when we are drawn to desire that which is wrong, or forbidden to us. Inordinate

desire is a desire which is not wrong in itself, but which, when it is excessive, distracts us from our end. Fasting trains us to win the control of desire by bringing the body into subjection to the spirit. One great writer on Ethics, in speaking of the need of teaching children to practise self-denial, tells us that the power of a man or woman to control sexual passion in after life has in many cases been won in childhood by little acts of self-denial in regard to sweets and other things of the sort.

You must decide which part of yourself you are going to realize—your best self, the centre of your spiritual force, or the lowest and most sensual part of your nature. No life can be strong at the centre unless it is pruned at the circumference. The gardener who wishes the tree to bear much fruit must prune it to save its energies running to waste in superfluous leaves. So S. Paul bids us to be courageous in Mortification. “Every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown ; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly ; so fight I, as not beating the air : but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage : lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected” (1 Cor. ix. 25–27).

2. *Humiliations.* As fasting tends to uproot Sensuality, so humiliations uproot Pride. Every virtue needs exercise. Love grows strong *by loving*, Humility by gladly *bearing humiliations*. Learn to welcome joyfully every slight, snub, insult, and all contempt ; *not* as though they were good *in themselves*, but because, if borne in the right spirit, they will kill out your most deadly enemy—Pride. We welcome the surgeon’s knife and dentist’s forceps, not because we enjoy pain in itself, but because the pain saves us from greater evil. So we

may learn to love those humiliations which destroy Pride and teach Humility.

3. *Obedience.* Self-will must be mortified by readiness in bearing contradictions, inconveniences, disappointments and by constantly doing little acts which we do not want to do. Ready *cheerful* obedience to those over us, and *strictness* in observing a Rule of Life, subdue the lower will to the higher will.

Examine yourself daily on these three forms of Mortification or Self-denial ; and make good resolutions.

MEDITATION ON DEATH

Contemplate your own death-bed. Then imagine yourself five minutes after Death.

CONSIDER.

1. *What is Death ?* The separation of the soul from the body. It may be either sudden—at one blow—or gradual. It may be painful or painless. It is *very* solemn, because it finally seals up your probation. Your life is sealed at death for Heaven or Hell. For which, if you die to-day ?

2. *It is certain.* It may be forgotten or ignored. But it is *the one certainty*. Every hour it draws nearer. Those who face it and prepare for it, rob it of half its terrors. For “the sting of death is sin” (1 Cor. xv. 56). Are you *ready to die now ?* If not, *why* not ? Get ready to-day. If you are not fit to die, you are not fit to live. “Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour” (S. Matt. xxv. 13). We know neither when, nor where, nor how it will come. Be ready to welcome the summons bravely, trustfully, sure of God’s care for you.

3. *Its circumstances.* You may picture to yourself

some of the possible surroundings. If you die at home, there will be your room with its familiar ornaments ; your doctor who has done all he can for you ; your priest who is ready to hear your last confession while you have strength to make it ; your relatives and friends as well as your servants, unless you have estranged them from you. Look at each one now in turn. Is there anything you would at that time wish to say to any one of them—a word of apology for offence caused or injury done, a word of reconciliation which will heal some wound ? If so, *say it now* : for you may not have time or opportunity to say it then. Write the letter to-day which will heal the wound. Is there anything which you feel that you ought to do to remedy some injustice or unkindness, or to fulfil some obligation ? If so, *do it now*, for you may have neither time nor energy to do it then.

Look around on your possessions. Of course they are not really yours. They belong to God. You are only His steward, to whom for a time He has entrusted His goods (see e.g. S. Luke xvi. 1, 2). Have you been a faithful steward of God's property ? In a few minutes you will see Him face to face, and will have to give an account of your stewardship. Remember that your money and investments and the profits of your business, your books, your house and furniture, your garden are not your own. You are the steward ; in a few minutes God will entrust them to some other steward, while you go to appear in His Presence and to be examined strictly as to how you have used His property.

Before your eyes close, would it not be well to see all those whose welfare has been largely dependent on your kindness, justice and generosity ? If they cannot come in person because your rules about work have been very strict, you can see them with your mind's eye.

Here are your servants. Have you been kind and considerate to them, and thoughtful for their souls' welfare, giving them abundant opportunities and encouragement to do their duty by God—"knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with Him"? (Eph. vi. 9). Or have you been impatient and irritable, visiting an unreasonable ill-temper on them because they cannot readily answer back?

Here are all those you have been employing—office boy, clerks, and men and women from the works. Have you paid them a just and fair wage, and treated them with generosity and consideration, as brothers in the great family of God? Or have you been harsh and mean, using them merely as instruments instead of persons, indifferent to their personal welfare? Don't waste your last few breaths in talking about the "iron law of wages," and so on. For you are about to face another "iron law"—that those who grind the faces of the poor are cursed of God. "It is ye that have eaten of the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses: what mean ye that ye crush My people, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts" (Is. iii. 15). Examine yourself by these other "iron laws"—"Ye shall love your neighbour as yourself." And "to do to all men as I would they should do unto me." Read your duty to God and your duty to your neighbour as they are set before you in the Church's Catechism.

Do not imagine that these thoughts of death are morbid. It is sheer wholesome common sense, the only rational and healthy way of living, to look at life from the death-bed, and to do now what you would wish to have done when the solemn hour of rendering an account of your

stewardship comes, gradually or suddenly, but surely and inevitably upon you.

This exercise on Death will enable you to reorganize your life on a really rational and common-sense basis, and set you free to live your life joyously ; for if you amend your life in earnest, death will be robbed of its sting and the grave of its victory.

IT TEACHES YOU :—

(1) *To despise worldly goods.* The Rich Fool took nothing with him the night he was called away (S. Luke xii. 20). Riches, luxuries, health, honours, power, and the like are goods lent to you by God for a short time, to help you to work out your end or purpose—the Glory of God. If you use them selfishly, you are a faithless steward. Look at them now, and be ready to part with *any or all at any moment.*

(2) *To despise worldly honour.* What does a dead man care for titles and flattery and decorations ? See yourself now as you will see yourself five minutes after death. While dear friends speak flattering words on earth, you will know the Truth and see how far you have come short of the glory of God.

(3) *To fly from pleasures of the flesh.* Your body will begin to turn to dust and worms. The pleasures of sin will have passed away, leaving in a lost soul unquenchable flames of desire. For an hour's pleasure you may have lost *eternal* bliss, lost God. Pray for courage to despise comforts, luxury, softness, self-indulgence, and to welcome and endure patiently hardships, inconveniences, poverty, insults.

PREPARATION FOR DEATH

It is impossible to enjoy the full rich peace of God and the glorious liberty of the sons of God, if you are haunted by the *fear of Death*. "The sting of death is sin." You can rob death of its sting at once by a good repentance and by persevering in sorrow for sin. It is well each week, say on Saturday, to make a short preparation for death, touching on these points :—

1. *Am I at peace with God?* Have I the full assurance that my sins are blotted out in the Blood of Jesus? (If not, go to a priest, and confess your sins as soon as possible.) Have I a *living Faith* in God? Do I trust Him *absolutely* to take care of me in life or death, and to accept me "in the Beloved," that is, for Jesu's sake? Am I utterly *distrustful of myself*, and relying only on Jesus for pardon and acceptance, for righteousness and salvation? Have I the faith of entire self-surrender? Am I willing to die at once here, now, gladly if it be for God's glory, and in accordance with His Will? Do I love God above life itself, so that I would sooner die than deliberately sin against Him?

2. *Am I at peace with Man?* Have I paid my debts? Have I tried to make amends to all whom I have injured? Am I nourishing any ill-feeling, grudge, dislike, hatred? Have I fully forgiven any who have injured me, and asked forgiveness of any whom I have injured? Have I made provision for those dependent on me?

3. *Make acts of Contrition*, Love, Trust in God, Self-surrender. Resolve not to put off, but to do at the earliest opportunity *whatever you would wish to have done* if you were to die *to-night*. Make this indeed a death unto sin. Accept to-morrow, if God gives it you, as a new birth;

and each day as given you only as one more opportunity of purifying and enriching that sacrifice of your life which you offer to God, and which He accepts and seals in death. Habitually look on the pangs of death as the solemn birthpangs into a fuller life. Dwell often on the eternal issue—Hell and eternal loss—or Heaven and the Victory won, to be with God for ever.

MEDITATION ON JUDGMENT

Picture. A soul standing stripped bare and alone before the Judgment Throne of Christ. Whose soul? Yours! Christ, the all holy Judge upon the Throne, gazing down upon you with eyes of flame, which burn up falsehood and penetrate to the innermost recesses of your soul.

Read 2 Cor. v. 10. "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

1 Cor. iii. 13. "Each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire."

CONSIDER.

1. How strange it will be. How lonely! How silent in that dumb world! Perhaps there will be for a time a vivid consciousness of the world as it rolls on without you and soon forgets you. But though it forgets you, it bears within it your influence, the effect of your life on others for good or for evil. This may go on till the Last Day, or for ever.

2. *The Particular Judgment.* We may contemplate the

Judgment as either Particular or General ; and we may note that it is not merely an event in the future, but also a process which is always going on in the present at every moment. *A process.* All life is made up of periods of growth and crisis. (The word "crisis" is the Greek word for judgment, distinction, separation.) Just as there are hidden processes at work which become manifest as the life passes from seed to bud and flower, so in your life there is a process always going on which is manifested at certain crises or on certain days. At school you wasted an hour in idleness ; that waste is already judged ; the hour is beyond your recall : it is a blank for ever : your character and brain power and influence in the world are so much the less through that lost opportunity. So in an unceasing, silent, subtle process, Judgment is always going on : each thought and word and deed, each opportunity taken or lost ; each minute and hour and day which become your own as you stamp them with your will, passes to the right or left of God's Throne as it is either in harmony with God's will or opposed to it. This is *the process* of Judgment.

The Particular Judgment is when your probation is sealed by death, and your character is revealed. *The General Judgment* at the last day will be the full and final manifestation of the victory of Good over Evil, and the triumph of God's Will which is so often hidden from us in this complicated life on earth. Judgment is not the expression of an opinion, but the manifestation of a state. We form for ourselves our final destiny by each decision of our will. Such decisions form character for good or evil. God's judgment is taking place every moment, as we co-operate with or rebel against Him. In this life some are too busy and distracted to attend to God ; life with its ceaseless din and whirl makes

them inattentive. But five minutes after death you will *remember* without distraction. *Do this now!*

“*Son, remember*” (S. Luke xvi. 25). When the soul of Dives, the rich man who had lived selfishly and luxuriously, was in Hades, “he lifted up his eyes, being in torment,” and begged that Lazarus might “dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.” But Abraham said, “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted and thou art in anguish.” What use have you made, or are you making, of your wealth and opportunities?

3. *Recall* to the utmost of your power (1) All the places in which you have lived, worked, sinned; your old home, school, place of business. (2) All the persons you have known, loved, injured, tempted, led astray, neglected to love or help. It is too late now. (3) All the opportunities you have neglected, wasted, lost. (4) All your words, “every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (S. Matt. xii. 36). (5) Are you censorious in your thoughts and harsh in your judgment of others? Dost thou behold “the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” Have you forgotten the stern commandment, “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you”? (S. Matt. vii. 1, 3). “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more” (Rom. xiv. 12, 13). (6) All the gifts and graces of God you have received without gratitude, misused or failed to use. Oh! what an *awful* sin is this ingratitude, which has received God’s love and

protection with *indifference*, slighted the appeal of Jesus, and ignored the warnings and pleadings of the Holy Spirit! Repent now: it will be too late then, on the day of Judgment (2 Cor. v. 10, R.V.). "We must all be made manifest before the Judgment Seat of Christ"—manifest, i.e. to ourselves, to saints and angels, to Christ and to God; without any companions, without any excuses, or untrue explanations, or flattering, or falsehood—every hidden motive naked, manifest, revealed.

4. *The Judge*. Kneel down and look up. Look into the face of God upon the throne of Judgment.

"God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient; and God is provoked every day" (Ps. vii. 12, Prayer Book version).

"These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes" (Ps. l. 21). Make acts of Self-abhorrence, and of Hatred of Sin. Resolve to fly from all occasions of sin.

Remember. Judgment will be universal, inevitable, impartial, and final. *Everyone* will appear before the Judgment seat of Christ;—kings and emperors, millionaires and paupers, the scoffer and the sceptic, the learned and the ignorant, the professedly religious and the person who is bitterly hostile to religion. Our Lord warns us that there will be many surprises. God does not accept man's judgments and standards—"the first shall be last and the last first" (S. Matt. xx. 6, etc.). All earthly titles, distinctions and estimates will shrivel away, and each man will be seen as he really is.

Remember—the day of Judgment is not the time for repentance. You must repent now, to-day. "To-day is

the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 6). God promises to forgive you if you repent. *He does not say that you can repent when you please.* Do you expect to be able to begin to cry for mercy on the day of Judgment? Why do you expect this? Because your Saviour will be your Judge and He is kind and tender and merciful? But it is He Himself Who warns you that on that day it will be too late. He Himself, Who pleads with you *now* to repent and accept Him as your Saviour, tells you that the day is drawing near when the door will be shut and the only answer to the cry for mercy, "Lord, Lord, open to us," will be "I know you not." He Himself will say, "Cast him out"—"Depart from Me" (see S. Matt. xxv. 11, 12, 30, 41). Why then do you deceive yourself by postponing your repentance and by refusing mercy to-day, in the vain hope that you may find it on that day when it cannot be had? Why not at once in deadly earnest "judge yourself that you may not be judged" and, making a good confession, receive that pardon and full absolution which may be had *now* but not *then*? Then for you there will be only the bright side of judgment—the joyful call "Come, ye blessed of My Father" (S. Matt. xxv. 34)—the joyful anticipation of the crown—"Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day; and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved His appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 8).

SUMMARY.

1. At death I shall appear alone before the Judgment seat of Christ, and my whole life will then be revealed.
2. Judgment is a self-acting process which even in earthly life is always going on,

3. I must give an account of my stewardship of time, talents, wealth, opportunity and grace.

4. I remember with deep sorrow having sinned grievously at these times . . . in these places . . . and against these persons. . . .

5. If I judge myself I shall not be judged. I will make a good confession with deep contrition and a courageous resolve to amend my life and to avoid all occasions of sin.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

Self-examination should be of two kinds ; General and Particular.

I. *General examination.* Divide your life into periods, such as (1) from earliest childhood to the time when you went to school. See what were your chief faults or sins, against God, parents, brothers and sisters, companions or servants. Sins of selfishness ? Temper ? Unkindness ?

(2) From the day you went to school till the day you left. Sins against God, your masters or teachers, or your fellow-students. Idleness ? Lying ? Cheating at work ?

(3) From the day you went to work or to college till the day of your Marriage or Ordination or change of work.

(4) From that day to the present time.

Forms of self-examination can be found in most books of devotion.

The General Examination should reveal to you your besetting sin—your chief faults of character and temperament, your chief disorderly affections and inordinate desires, the chief vices which must be uprooted, the passions which most need to be mortified and the virtues in which you are most lacking.

Just as a man of business, because he is in earnest in

his desire to become rich, finds it necessary from time to time to take stock of his possessions, that he may see where he has gained and where lost, which investments have paid and which have failed to do so ; just as he from time to time revises his methods, and reconsiders his plans so as to be sure that he is making the best of his opportunities, so you if you are in earnest in your desire to become holy must take stock of your life, see whether all your powers and talents are invested in the most profitable manner, see where you have gained or lost, what changes must be made in your habits and manner of life.

And, if you are really in earnest, you will not adopt just *any* means which may by chance occur to you ; you will try to find out the *best* means, and you will not merely adopt some of them but all of them. The farmer does not try to pull up some weeds, but all weeds. If you never examine your soul, little faults will develop into iron habits or destructive vices, little failures of temper or of character will grow into devouring passions, and the garden of your soul will produce no lovely flowers or rich fruit, because it will all be overrun with weeds. " I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding : and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, the face thereof was covered with nettles, and the stone wall thereof was broken down " (Prov. xxiv. 30, 31).

Besides the general examination of your whole life, each night you should make a general examination of the day—thinking backward over the periods of the day. What have I done, said, thought since supper ? Then from supper to midday and from midday to breakfast—recalling the persons with whom you have mixed, words spoken, deeds done or left undone and so on—confessing them with deep contrition to God.

II. *Particular examination.* But in addition to regular forms of *general* examination of this kind, you should make a *particular* examination on one single vice which you seek to uproot or one single virtue you are trying to acquire. As a general on taking over a command inspects his fortress or his lines of trenches with minute care, and when he has noted the weakest point or most exposed position does all he can to strengthen it, and watches it day by day ; and as he meditates on the forces at his command for defence and attack to see in what he is most deficient, and then eagerly applies for the heavy or machine guns, the munitions, the cavalry, or whatever it is that he most urgently needs : so you, in your general examination will note your besetting sin, your chief temptation, your weakest point, the point at which you are most exposed to the attacks of the Devil ; and your chief need, the virtue in which you are most deficient. And then in your particular examination you will watch vigilantly over the one and pray urgently for the other and use the best means—and all (not some of) the means—to obtain it.

The particular examination should be confined to one point—one vice to be uprooted or one virtue to be attained. The principle is familiar in modern warfare, viz. that of concentrating great effort on one point without neglecting any point in the whole line. As the King of Syria commanded his captains, “ Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel ” (Kings xxii. 31), so pick out your champion vice, and try to slay it. Slay Goliath and the other Philistines will flee (1 Sam. xvii. 51). Your effort must embrace the interior root of the sin as well as the exterior expression of it ; as for instance if you are trying to conquer censorious speech, you must also attack the pride from which it springs ; or if you are trying to cultivate a humble spirit, you must

exercise yourself in exterior acts of humility, for the exterior and interior life react on one another.

The only essential of the Particular Examen is that twice or thrice a day you will mark down in some manner whether or not you have fallen into this sin. What helps one soul may not help another; but a simple method which helps some to self-conquest is to give yourself with strict honesty marks as we did at school—say, five marks for perfection—deduct one for each slight failure and two for a gross failure. For example: if you are trying to conquer excessive or careless speech: divide your day into periods when the fault is most conspicuous. In some cases this would be after the midday and the evening meal. Retire for two minutes: place yourself in God's Presence: recall and examine your words. If you have failed once grievously, deduct two or three marks and enter three or two on your diary: if you have made no effort to restrain yourself, enter 0: if you have not fallen into this sin or weakness, enter five. If you forget, or neglect, to make your examen put a cross (x). But judge yourself fairly and honestly as in God's sight. Your marking ought to tally with that of the recording angel which will be revealed when the Judgment is set and the books are opened. Then in a week or two you will be able to see whether you are making any real progress or not in winning the control of your speech. You can make your own mark book thus:—

June....	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
2 p.m. ..	5	0	3	0	5	3	5
5 p.m. ..	4	x	2	0	x	2	4
Bedtime	5	5	4	x	1	5	5

If such a method of book-keeping seems to you so artificial as to harm your spiritual life, then invent some better method of your own. The one only essential thing is to see that you progress in the conquest of yourself. The confessions of some persons reveal the same fault or sin confessed regularly for many years, with useless regrets and ineffectual resolves. This deadens the soul and weakens the will; and is it not also an abuse of God's patience and forbearance, and to treat Him as you would not treat an earthly master? If an employer were to say to you, "I did not engage you to waste your time in idle and frivolous conversation. You are warned. You will be dismissed if you do it again," you would be very careful not to offend any more.

Well! you say you want to employ yourself in God's service. Do you wish to tolerate in yourself a slack and careless service just because your supreme Master is patient and long-suffering? This would be a profound disloyalty. Be as strict and severe toward yourself in God's service as a foreman would be in the service of a first-class firm employed on some vitally important work. Do not tolerate any weakness, error or sin. Punish yourself justly, regularly and with perseverance until your besetting sin is conquered, or chief weakness is controlled. Just as the whole army of the Philistines fled when David cut off the head of Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 51), so, if you cut off the head of your chief sin, a whole army of lesser vices will be conquered. As a tree withers and decays and dies if you cut through its roots or dig them up, so if you root out your chief sin a host of lesser sins will die.

It is possible that a too prolonged use of the particular examen on one sin may become mechanical and so the soul grow stale. If you find this to be the case, you should

change the subject of examination, or else abandon this exercise until you feel that it would help you to use it again.

While the particular examen will deal especially at first with the extirpation or uprooting of vice and the mortification of passion, it may also be used for such matters as these—Humility, Fraternal Charity, Mortification, Restraint in Speech, a pure intention for God's Glory. But these will be dealt with later.

MEDITATION ON THE PRODIGAL SON

Read S. Luke xv. 11–24.

Pray for courage to repent.

CONSIDER.

1. *His ingratitude.* Self-love and self-will utterly deaden the soul to the feelings of others; the years of love and protection and support are forgotten. He leaves without asking permission or advice. Feel the sorrow and disappointment of his father's heart, the bitter wound to his love.

2. *His folly.* Sin blinds the judgment, fascinates the mind and mesmerizes the soul. The son ignored the counsels, warnings, experience, persuasions of his father. He is young, rash, inexperienced, conceited, self-willed. He chooses an *imaginary* pleasure, in preference to the *solid joys* of Duty, Home, Love.

3. *His sin.* Brooding over the restraints of virtue, exaggerating trifling inconveniences, a desire to be independent, self-love, self-will, self-sufficiency, self-indulgence and self-confidence.

4. *His loss.* Home, father, love, safety, innocence,

his goods, his strength, health, peace of mind, and self-respect. Consequences of sin—defilement, want, famine, slavery, heart-ache, degradation.

5. *His return.* He remembered his past happiness. He realized his present need. He *trusted* his father's gentle, loving character. He had *courage* to arise and face the hardships of each step homeward. He had *humility* to confess his sin, and to desire even the *lowest* place at home. He saw his sin not only as it affected himself, but as it had wounded his father.

Apply each point to yourself. When we turn our backs on God, we become self-willed and self-centred. As every step the Prodigal took carried him farther away from his home and made his return more difficult, so every day you live unconverted and self-centred carries you further away from God ; each venial sin increases your separation from Him and carries you further away from fervour into that state of Lukewarmness which lies—a kind of “No man's land”—between you and mortal sin.

Ingratitude to God is the basest of sins, for God has left nothing undone to win our love : and yet frequently you take all His gifts and loving care for granted as though they were your right. You do not even think of thanking Him for them. Ingratitude, i.e. failure to praise and thank God, plunges the soul into a state of tepidity, or lukewarmness. You have grievously wounded God's heart by sin, lost your place in His Church, deserved to be eternally abandoned to the degradation and tyranny of sin.

When temptation is strong, it is well to remember that, while the pleasures of sin are great, the joys of sanctity are greater : and that, while we must take pains and suffer courageously if we would preserve our virtue,

these pains of virtue are as nothing compared to the penalty of vice. The haunting sense of degradation, the loss of self-respect, the loss of freedom, the torment of conscience, the gnawing of the worm of remorse, the bitter knowledge that sin cannot satisfy, the restless and useless brooding of anger, disgust and loathing—all these await you, if you follow the path of sin.

Make your resolve. Arise. Turn heart and mind and will God-ward.

The Decision. When He spake this parable, our Lord was addressing a little group of outcasts, publicans, and harlots, open and notorious sinners. And He said these gracious words "When he came to himself." He did not remind them of their sins and failures, or reproach them with their past. With strong and gentle hand, He touched the springs of memory and hope, and awakened what remained of their self-respect. He said, as it were, "I know all the sin and misery of your life. But beneath the shame and sorrow of your sinning there is still a spark of the divine nature in you: you are still sons of God, however long you may have been in the far-off country. Sin is not your true nature. Sin is a dream from which you must awaken, a delirium from which you must recover. When you come to yourself, your true self, you will say, "I will arise and go to my Father."

Now make your decision. Look at the Cross. Jesus, the Son of God, came into the far-off country to seek and save you who were lost. He suffered and died for you, to win your love. You cannot refuse Him. You doubt your strength? But you cannot doubt His. Distrust yourself. Trust Him. He will do in you what you cannot do for yourself. Surrender yourself to Him in one great, strong, generous decision, and yield yourself entirely up to Him.

The joy of the Return. You should meditate frequently, if you are returning to God from a life which perhaps has been centred on self or pleasure or the world, on the joy which awaits you when you have borne the pain. Our dear Redeemer endured temptation and suffering far more intense than any we can know, because of the spiritual refinement of a sinless Heart. And He endured them all without flinching because He kept His thoughts fixed on "the joy that was set before Him." The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews bids us look at Him "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising shame" (Heb. xii. 2). The joy of His return to the Father, His work accomplished, the world redeemed: the joy of seeing you respond to His love, and making your decision and turning your face homeward: the joy of being your companion on your homeward way and of presenting you to the Father.

So you must dwell on the joy of that confession which will shatter your pride and liberate your soul: the joy of Absolution, as the life of Christ pours into your wounds to heal them: the joy of a good conscience, as day by day you grow more intimate with Jesus, your companion, and feel in each communion the joy of His abundant life growing stronger within you: the joy of knowing that every day brings you nearer to your home in the Father's Heart: the joy of the assurance of final victory and peace if you are faithful: the joy of a crown awaiting you. This habit of looking past temptation and suffering to the joy set before you will strengthen you in the hour of your temptation and give you courage to endure and persevere.

Resolve (1) Never to look back at the memory of sin. (2) To endure every suffering, discomfort, and hardship on the way home. (3) To recognize that you have no claim on

God, that you have lost your *position* as a son,—though not the *nature* of a son. Confess your sins with deep humility and welcome any contempt or insult, for it is less than you deserve. See God eagerly running towards you to welcome you home.

CONFESSION

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is desperately sick” (Jer. xvii. 9). Keep on using these meditations on Death, Judgment, and Hell, till you begin to know yourself and your *real* motives, your hidden and subtle pride and selfishness. Judge yourself, *not* by comparison with your neighbour, but *with regard to the end* or purpose with which God created you. By this you will anticipate and avert final condemnation. “If we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged” (1 Cor. xi. 31). Do not be discouraged if self-examination reveals a corruption which you never before suspected. It was there all the time, but you did not realize it. Rejoice at the conviction of sin. For it means that the light of God is now penetrating to the *hidden roots of sin* in your heart and mind and will. And where His light shines, it kills sin; a good confession uproots it, and absolution heals the wound.

When you have thoroughly examined your life in its deepest springs, see it all in the light of the love of Jesus. Feel His eye burning down on you with pitying love. Try to realize fully what disappointment and pain each sin has cost Him *because He loves you*. Especially dwell on the *ingratitude* of your cold and selfish heart. Abhor yourself and your sin. Renew your resolutions to fear, hate and avoid the occasions of sin. Write down your sins, and go to some

priest and confess them all to God before him. Do not let false pride or cowardice keep you back. Jesus alone can bear and atone for the *guilt* of sin. You should desire to bear the *full shame* of it. If you are truly humble and penitent, you should be willing to confess your sins openly before all men. Confession to God before His priest will break false pride, deepen your sense of the shame and horror of sin, increase your self-knowledge, strengthen you in future temptations, satisfy your sense of honour and candour, and bring you the infinite joy of full and free pardon and the healing grace of absolution through that ministry which God Himself appointed (S. John xx. 19-23).

THE ANGELUS



The Angel of the Lord announced to Mary, and she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

HAIL MARY full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women ; and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, *Jesus*.

Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.



Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to Thy Word.

Hail Mary, etc.



The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, etc.



WE BESEECH THEE, O Lord, pour Thy grace into our hearts, that as we have known the Incarnation of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of an Angel ; so by His Cross ✠ and Passion, we may be brought unto the glory of His Resurrection ; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

THE CROWN OF JESUS

“The Crown of Jesus” is a method of mental prayer on the Holy Mysteries, which make a crown of love and devotion for Christ the King of kings. It can be used either by yourself or with a class or guild, every day of the week before you receive Communion. You can use any section of it, dividing it up as you please, and thinking devoutly with prayer and praise over each mystery. For example, you may say “The Crown of Joy” with your morning prayers, “The Crown of Thorns” at mid-day, and “The Crown of Glory” at night. You may say it all through with devotion in fifteen minutes, or you may take any one mystery, read the passage of Scripture, and meditate on it all day long. It would be well to use some sections of it before and after each meditation on “The Illuminative Way.” If you use it devoutly it will kindle your love for your King.

I. THE CROWN OF JOY	II. THE CROWN OF THORNS	III. THE CROWN OF GLORY
1. The Annunciation	1. The Agony	1. The Resurrection
2. The Visitation	2. The Scourging	2. The Ascension
3. The Birth	3. The Crown of Thorns	3. The Holy Spirit
4. The Presentation	4. The Bearing of the Cross	4. The Triumph of the Church in the Saints
5. The Finding of Christ	5. The Crucifixion	5. The Beatific Vision

I. THE CROWN OF JOY.

THE FIVE JOYFUL MYSTERIES.

1. *The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.* Let us meditate on the message of the angel Gabriel to the

Blessed Virgin announcing to her the incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Read S. Luke i. 26-38. Say the Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be to the Father.

Let us pray.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, pour Thy grace into our hearts ; that, as we have known the Incarnation of Thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an Angel, so by His Cross and Passion we may be brought unto the glory of His Resurrection ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

2. *The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.* Let us meditate on the Blessed Virgin going to visit her cousin S. Elizabeth, when she heard from the Angel that she also had conceived a son.

S. Luke i. 39-56. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

O Almighty God, who didst move the Mother of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, to visit her cousin Elizabeth ; grant that our hearts may be so visited by Thy most holy Son, that being freed from all sin, we may evermore give praise and thanks to Him, Who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end. Amen.

3. *The Birth of our Blessed Lord.* Let us meditate on the Blessed Virgin bringing forth her first-born Son, Jesus Christ, and laying Him in a manger.

S. Luke ii. 1-20. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Who hast given us Thy Only-Begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and to be born of a

pure Virgin ; grant that we being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit ; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

4. *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple.* Let us meditate on the Blessed Virgin, when the days of her Purification were accomplished, presenting the Child Jesus in the Temple to the Lord.

S. Luke ii. 22-39. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, we humbly beseech Thy Majesty, that, as Thy only-begotten Son was presented in the Temple in substance of our flesh, so we may be presented unto Thee with pure and clean hearts, by the same Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

5. *The finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.* Let us meditate on the Blessed Virgin and S. Joseph losing our Blessed Lord, and finding Him after the space of three days in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors.

S. Luke ii. 41-51. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

O Lord, we beseech Thee mercifully to receive the prayers of Thy people which call upon Thee ; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

II. THE CROWN OF THORNS.

THE FIVE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES.

1. *The Bloody Sweat of Jesus in the Garden.* Let us meditate on our Saviour's agony of mind, when His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

S. Luke xxii. 39-47. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, Who dost feed and purify Thy sheep with thine own most precious Blood, may this my meditation on Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat move me to sincere repentance for all my sins, and may the thought of Thy passion be for comfort and salvation to me and to all Thy faithful people; and this I pray, for Thy most tender mercy's sake. Amen.

2. *The Scourging of Jesus.* Let us meditate on the sufferings of Jesus in being bound to a pillar and cruelly scourged by the Roman soldiers.

S. Mark xv. 16-21. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Very God and Very Man, Who was stripped of Thy garments, bound to a pillar, and most cruelly scourged, we implore Thee by these most grievous pains, and by all the other torments of Thy Passion, to enable us to bear patiently whatsoever chastisements Thou mayest think fit to lay upon us, and to remember that whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Amen.

3. *The Crowning with Thorns.* Let us meditate on our Saviour's sufferings when the Crown of Thorns was pressed down on His sacred Head.

S. John xix. 2-3. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who wast crowned with thorns, blindfolded, buffeted, struck with a reed, clothed in derision with a purple garment, mocked and reviled; have mercy on us and pierce us so thoroughly with the thorns of penitence, that we may find pardon in this life, and may hereafter be found meet to be crowned by Thee with glory in Heaven. Amen.

4. *The Bearing of the Cross.* Let us meditate on our Saviour's sufferings when He bore the Cross on which He was to be crucified.

S. John xix. 17. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst bear Thy Cross along the road to Calvary, grant that we may glory in nothing save only in the Cross, that by it the world may be crucified unto us, and we unto the world; give us strength to bear our cross after Thee, and to follow in Thy footsteps, that we may not shrink from suffering with Thee, but rather rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for Thy Name's sake. Amen.

5. *The Crucifixion.* Let us meditate on the sufferings of our Lord when His sacred Hands and Feet were nailed to the Cross.

S. John xix. 18-31. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we beseech Thee graciously to behold this Thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the Cross, Who now liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

III. THE CROWN OF GLORY.

THE FIVE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES.

1. *The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord.* Let us meditate on our Blessed Lord's triumphing over death and rising from the grave.

S. Matt. xxviii. 1-9. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Who through Thy only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech Thee, that, as by Thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by Thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

2. *The Ascension of our Blessed Lord.* Let us meditate on our Blessed Lord's Ascension into Heaven in the presence of the Apostles and Angels.

Acts i. 6-12. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

3. *The Descent of the Holy Ghost.* Let us meditate on our Blessed Lord sending down the Holy Ghost on the Apostles as He had promised.

Acts ii. 1-5. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

God, Who didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of Thy Holy Spirit ; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort ; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

4. *The Triumph of the Church in the Saints.* Let us contemplate the worship which the Saints and Angels in Heaven pay to our Blessed Lord.

Revelation vii. 9—end. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

O Almighty God, Who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical Body of Thy Son Christ our Lord ; grant us grace so to follow Thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

5. *The Beatific Vision.* Let us contemplate the unspeakable bliss of dwelling for ever in the presence of God.

Revelation iv. 1—9. Our Father. Hail Mary. Gloria.

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, Who hast given unto us Thy servants grace by the confession of a true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity ; We beseech Thee, that Thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, Who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

THE ILLUMINATIVE WAY

Introduction. Up to this point the Meditations have been such as may help to purify the soul from sin. Our object has been to uproot vices, to conquer disorderly passions and affections, and to restrain inordinate desire. We have learned to fear and hate and loathe sin as the greatest evil, to dread its consequences and to avoid its occasions. But purification is only a negative process : and Christianity is positive consecration. Purification aims at cleansing, and detachment from evil. Illumination aims at kindling, and attaching the soul to Christ.

The Illuminative Way leads us to meditate on the Example of Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and to fill the cleansed heart with a passionate love for Him. It should be noted that while these objects are represented as consecutive, following one upon the other, they are really concurrent processes ; for they go on at the same time, though the emphasis varies. First it is stronger on Repentance, but subsequently on Faith. It is not enough to cast out the evil spirit. Such a process would merely leave the heart vacant and empty. We must gaze on Christ until we desire Him and take Him as our Guide, so that we may come to know Him as our Friend.

Christ is to be formed in you. You are to be conformed to His likeness—His character is to be reproduced in you. It is through you that He will manifest Himself to the World. He tells you—" As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you " (S. John xx. 21). " I am the Light of the World . . . ye are the light of the World " (S. John ix. 5 ;

S. Matt. v. 14). The light of the Holy Spirit will reveal to you the wonder and beauty of our dear Lord ; and when you have taken Him as your Guide, He will illuminate your Way. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path" (Ps. cxix. 105). "In Thy light shall we see light" (Ps. xxxvi. 9).

1. *Remember* in the following Meditation, that it is *for you* that Jesus came and lived and suffered and died. He Himself assured us that if only one lost sheep had wandered away, the Good Shepherd would have left all to seek and find it. If you alone of all mankind had sinned, the Son of God would have died upon the Cross for you. Say often, "For me, O Lord, for me."

2. *Reconstruct* the scenes of our Lord's life as vividly as you can. Picture to yourself the surrounding country, the weather, the hills, roads, trees, houses, persons. Imagine yourself actually present among the people who are listening to Him and asking Him questions, and see Him looking at you. You may vary this, if it will help you to do so, by picturing the event as happening in your own town or village : by imagining Christ born in that cottage which you can see from your window : or Christ standing at the corner of your High Street and speaking to a little group of men and women. Then *imagine* yourself joining the group and asking Him questions. The essential point is that, amidst the scene wherever you picture it, you should come into personal communion with your living, loving Saviour, and converse with Him.

3. *Resolve* that you will follow Christ with sincere desire, and with strong courage, glad to suffer what He suffered, shrinking from nothing which He bore for you, withholding nothing in your desire to follow very closely in His footsteps, near to Him.

4. *Try to catch His spirit.* Every moment dependent on the Father, waiting on God to know His Will, absolutely obedient, eagerly spending Himself in the service of God, the ministry to man :—in a word, burning with a consuming zeal for God's glory and man's salvation.

MEDITATION ON THE REIGN OF CHRIST

Picture. The villages, synagogues, cities, streets, hills, the scenes in which Jesus Christ preached and ministered.

Pray for grace to hear His call, and to follow Him promptly and with loyalty, devotion and enthusiasm.

Imagine. 1. An earthly King—chosen by God Himself, to whom all Christian princes and all Christian men owe reverence and obedience. Imagine such a one, perfect in character, endowed with every Christian virtue, wiser than Solomon, having every heroic quality.

2. Mark how the King addresses all his people. “My will is to conquer the whole world, to deliver all mankind from the power of evil and to win every man into obedience to good. I am setting out upon this great enterprise ; it will be full of peril, hardship, danger, suffering and adventure. If you desire to follow me you must be content to live as I live, to share my rough soldier's food and drink, to fight by day and watch by night, so that, when the victory has been won, you may share with me in the glory.”

CONSIDER.

1. *The glory of Christ our King.* He has stood before the world now for nearly two thousand years, and no one has found any flaw or imperfection in His character.

Kings bow before Him and acknowledge Him as King of kings. Heroes look up to Him with adoring love, and find in Him the spring of courage and the crown of heroism. Philosophers bow before His wisdom, and confess that His teaching satisfies the yearning of the mind for truth. Saints adore Him and witness that His friendship richly satisfies the yearning of the heart for love. Sinners worship Him as the Redeemer who has shattered the chains which bound them in a slavery to sin, and has set them free and given them strength to win their victory. And bad men pay Him the homage of their hatred. And now He speaks to you, and calls you to follow Him.

2. *His claim upon you.* He has every right to claim your loyal obedience and your love. He created you for His glory, to take part in this Holy War. He died for you, in order to shatter the power of Satan and set you free. He has watched over you from your birth : ennobled you by allowing you to be born again into His family in Holy Baptism, the Royal Family of the King of kings : enrolled you in His Army, trained you in holy discipline : armed you with the Holy Spirit in Confirmation : fed you at His Table in Holy Communion. And now the trumpet sounds, summoning you to follow Him to War : and He calls you by name. You will not say, " I have grown so much accustomed to my comforts and luxuries and to doing as I please that I cannot change my habits now. I cannot face real warfare, or suffer for Thee what Thou didst suffer for me." You cannot answer thus. His claim upon you is too great for that ; His call is absolutely imperative.

3. *The splendour of the Enterprise.* So far exceeding all other adventures. Kingdoms and Empires rise and

fall ; but the Church, the Kingdom of God, survives the ages, and grows and spreads. Other kings spread their dominion by force, but Jesus by persuasion : so that in His Kingdom all are free. Other armies leave behind them a trail of sorrow and misery, of ruined homes and maimed lives, of blood and tears and slaughter and death. But the Army He summons you to join leaves nothing behind it but rich and fertile blessing, captives set free, wounded men healed, quarrels reconciled, homes restored to happiness, hearts cleansed. All other occupations are tame and dull, compared to this glorious work of saving souls and winning the world for God. When Britons heard the call " Your King and your Country need you," three millions of the best and bravest of our sons forsook all to follow their King. It was indeed a Holy War for Liberty, Justice and Righteousness ; and glorious it was for these noble lads to go forth of their own free will to face wounds and death at Duty's call. But great and noble as that call was, this is far greater. To win souls by persuasion instead of by force, by patient suffering and by love is the supreme victory. The Companions by whose side you will march and fight are the best, bravest and most noble of mankind,—the Saints of God.

4. *The Conditions of His Service.* He will share with us the same food, clothing, marching, watching, suffering and peril. He has already by Himself alone engaged the enemy and shattered his power. It only remains to drive him out of the positions in which he is entrenched. He will lead you, not follow. He has already borne the first great shock of the attack. You cannot refuse to follow such a Leader ; nor can you, without feeling degraded, ask to have better food or clothing or a more comfortable tent than your great Leader has had. Ask your companions, the saints, and they will tell you that there are

more troubles involved in a worldly life than in a life of real consecration, more incessant temptations and conflicts in a life of tepidity or lukewarmness than in a life of fervour.

Pray for the grace of entire consecration.

Resolve. To follow Jesus Christ in His great enterprise of redeeming the world as closely as you are able, and to make the Imitation of Christ your one object.

SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF CHRIST.

1. If an earthly king, who had God's commission and every claim on your obedience and loyalty, summoned you to follow him in a great enterprise to liberate the world from an awful tyranny, you would not refuse him.

2. If the conditions of his service were to share with him the food and drink, the hardships and perils, the fighting and watching, the suffering and the wounds, you would not ask for better conditions than those under which he lived.

3. This is what Jesus, the King of kings, asks of you. You must make the Imitation of Christ your standard and rule, and consecrate yourself to follow Him with fervour, strictness, enthusiasm and loyalty.

LECTURE ON THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man for a twofold purpose : 1. For Redemption. 2. For Revelation.

1. *Redemption.* First He came to redeem us. Man cannot save himself. His nature is fallen. He has a natural tendency to fall away from God. He is sinful : and he cannot by his own efforts make atonement for his sin, or reunite himself to God. He is under the mes-

meric influence of the Devil, who is the Prince of this world. Christ came and took our human nature into union with His divine Person, in order that He might redeem us from the power of Sin, shatter the power of Satan, and reunite us to God. This He did by the one all-sufficient and perfect sacrifice of a sinless life and a willing death. We are redeemed by His most precious Blood shed for us upon the Cross. But this redemption which He has accomplished must be appropriated by faith. What He accomplished *for* us He must accomplish *in* us. He did for us on the Cross what we could not do for ourselves; but He will not force His redemption on us. He expects us to co-operate with Him in redeeming the world.

— 2. *Revelation.* He came to reveal both God and man. He came to show us the Father. “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father” (S. John xiv. 9). And He came to show us ourselves, to be our Example. He does not expect us to redeem ourselves, for that we cannot do; but He does expect us to try, by His help, to be like Him, to take Him as our example, to try to be conformed to His image, and to make His life the test and standard of our own. S. Peter tells us “For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow His steps” (1 S. Peter ii. 21). Again and again S. Paul encourages us to the same lofty enterprise, the Imitation of Christ. We are to have His mind, to think His thoughts. “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. ii. 5). We are to bear patiently with each other and to forgive one another freely and generously, having “a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving each other if any man have a complaint against any; *even as* the Lord

forgave you, so also do ye ” (Col. iii. 12.) “ Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, *even as* God also in Christ forgave you ” (Eph. iv. 32). “ If we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection. . . . If we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him ” (Rom. vi. 5, 8). Christ is to be formed “ in us ” (see Gal. iv. 19). We are predestined to be conformed to the image of God’s Son. “ For whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son ” (Rom. viii. 29).

And this teaching of the Apostles is only the echo of our Lord’s own words. “ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ” (S. Matt. xi. 29). He means to reveal Himself to the world, not in a book—apparently He did not write a line—but in the Christlike lives of His followers. We have the awful responsibility placed upon us of reproducing and manifesting to the world this character of Christ. This is His method of revelation, the way in which He reveals Himself to men.

Our King’s call to follow Him is twofold ;—first, *general* ; secondly, *special*.

The *general* call is to imitate Christ, to follow Him, in our ordinary daily life, without abandoning our normal occupations. The *special* call is to forsake all and follow Him in poverty, chastity, and obedience. This call He addresses to individuals, not to all mankind. This latter will be dealt with when we speak of the election of a state. To-day it is sufficient to examine yourself on the general call on some such lines as these :—

1. Do I sincerely try, with zeal and enthusiasm, to imitate Christ—to be Christlike ?

2. Am I tolerating anything in my life, or work, or character, which is unlike Christ ?

3. Am I doing my best so to overcome my natural inclinations, my temper, my disposition that I may become more conformed to His image ?

4. Am I firmly resolved to ask myself at every point, "What would Jesus think or do or say ?" and then faithfully to do or say what He would ?

Pray for courage to follow Christ with fervent zeal, loyalty and enthusiasm, wherever He may lead you. It is a practice as simple as it is useful to take point after point in His character and to use this Prayer of the Sacred Heart, turning it into a simple prayer thus :—

O Jesu, who art meek and lowly in heart,
Make my heart like Thy Sacred Heart.

O Jesu, who art pure in heart,
Make my heart like Thy Sacred Heart.

O Jesu, who art fervent in heart,
Make my heart like Thy Sacred Heart.

and so on, according to the vice you are trying to conquer, or the virtue you are trying to cultivate.

MEDITATION ON THE ANNUNCIATION

Read S. Luke i. 26-38. *Picture*—the cottage at Nazareth, the persons—Gabriel and Blessed Mary. *See* them, *hear* their words, *feel* what they felt. *Pray* for grace to love and desire Humility. .

CONSIDER.

1. *The Son of God became the Son of Man* in order that the sons of men might become the sons of God. You were created to know, and love, and serve God. The Son of God became Incarnate to bring men back to the *knowledge* of God, to win them back to the *love* of God and to lead them to consecrate themselves to the *service* of God.

2. *To teach us Humility.* He emptied Himself of His glory, forsook the splendours of Heaven, and abandoned (so far as He could) the prerogatives of His Godhead. He did not choose the glory and splendour, and pomp of a royal state on earth ; nor did He descend upon humanity with splendour, or force, or wealth, but came to us, as we must come to Him, in all the helplessness and humility of a little child (S. Matt. xviii. 3).

3. *The Sympathy of God.* He is conceived and formed in the Virgin's womb to teach us the all-penetrating intimate love of God, Who abides in, and issues forth from, the deepest springs of man's nature. His love is not one-sided, self-sufficient patronage, but true sympathy which asks as well as gives. He asks us *to take care* of Him before He promises to take care of us. He *trusts* us with Himself before He asks us to surrender ourselves to Him. He experiences our life and makes it His own before He asks us to enter into His life. He dwells in us before He bids us abide in Him.

4. *He takes our flesh* of the Blessed Virgin to teach us purity. He claims not only the homage of our spirits, but the hallowing of our bodies which are the tabernacles in which He dwells. As you think of Him coming thus to us in the lowliness and helpless condition of an infant, ask for the grace of meekness and humility : and pray

that He will sanctify our bodies in chastity and our souls in humility and love.

5. *Our Lady.* The Blessed Virgin Mary, in the purity of her life and the perfection of her self-surrender, offers to God the opportunity of the world's redemption. God never asks what He does not give. God's self-abandonment is met by Mary's self-surrender: God's condescension by Mary's humility. God does not ask of you what you cannot give, great talents, a mighty intellect, vast wealth. He only asks what each can give, "My son, give Me thine heart" (Prov. xxiii. 26). As you hear our Lady answering to God's call, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to Thy word," pray for the grace of entire self-surrender. Add to this the self-surrender of S. Paul. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" If you place no limits on the completeness of your self-surrender, then God will fill you with Himself, and use you for the redemption of the world. Our Lady as the Mother of the Son of God is our mother too, since we are new-born in Christ. Ask constantly for her intercessions, that the pure flame of the love of Jesus which first kindled in her heart may burn in your heart with ever-growing fervour of devotion.

MEDITATION ON BETHLEHEM

Read S. Luke ii. 1-2. *Picture* Bethlehem, the Inn, the Manger, the Cradle. *See* the persons and animals. *Hear* their words, conversations. *Feel* the bitter cold wind, the Virgin Mother's anxieties, fears, hope, love.

CONSIDER.

1. *The Infant Saviour is homeless.* He is born away from home, an outcast from the inn, among strangers,

amidst contempt and callous *indifference*. How shameful of me to cling too eagerly to my home, to refuse to forsake it for love of Him ! Lord, teach me to love poverty.

2. *The Discomforts*. The draughts and bitter cold wind in the stable, the dirt and smell and noise of the animals ; no couches, or seats, or bed, or fire, or privacy. How shameful of me to *fret at discomforts*, anxiously to provide luxuries, to grumble at inconveniences ! Lord, teach me to endure hardness, to despise luxury, to ignore discomforts, to love poverty and simplicity of life that I may be like Thee.

3. *The Perils*. The coarse violence of brutal men. The danger of sickness, colds, fevers ; the lack of good food : and the child, so delicate, fragile, tender. How shameful of me to be so fussy about health, danger of infection, bad drains, unsuitable food ! Lord, help me to forget myself, and to be indifferent to health or sickness, to life or death, except in so far as they help or hinder me in Thy service.

4. *The Love of Poverty*. Mary is too poor to bring a lamb, so she offers two turtle doves (ver. 24). But with them she uplifts the Lamb of God, and offers Him to the Father. Seek stern simplicity of life. Love poverty for Jesus' sake. The love of money, covetousness, is the cruel enemy which hardens hearts and kills out love and imperils souls. As the love of Jesus burns more brightly in your heart, you will be learning to ask, day by day, "Lord, what may I give up for Thee ?" The more you detach yourself from luxury and comforts, the more brightly will the love of God burn in your heart.

Pray. O Lord, who for our sakes didst become poor, that we through Thy poverty might be rich ; deliver us, we beseech Thee, from the love of this world, that serving

Thee with a single heart we may attain unto the riches of the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Resolve. To cultivate real simplicity of life and never to grumble or complain at inconveniences.

LECTURE ON HOW TO ACQUIRE VIRTUE

We have seen that it is our duty to be indifferent to all things, except in so far as they help or hinder us in attaining our end. This holy indifference is not a negative quality, the entire elimination and destruction of desire : it is, on the contrary, a positive quality, the concentration of desire on the one thing which supremely matters, a discipline of detachment and attachment by which desire is trained and educated to abhor that which is evil and to cleave to that which is good. In the Purgative Way we have seen that we learn to avoid sin by meditating on its destructive effect, the unhappiness it inevitably brings, the punishment which awaits it ; and this led us to loathe, hate and abhor sin and to shrink even from the occasions of committing it.

In following the Illuminative Way, this same method which has detached us from vice will attach us to virtue. In trying to acquire a virtue we may follow some such process as this :—(1) The Mind must admire it. (2) The Heart must desire it. (3) The Will must acquire it.

1. *The Mind must admire it.* If we are convinced that we ought to be more charitable and kind, we should meditate on the *excellence* of kindness, e.g. that when we hear or see kind words or deeds our heart rejoices and our conscience approves : the *utility* of kindness, e.g. that the person who is kind in his judgments and in his actions avoids making enemies and succeeds in making friends :

and then the *happiness* of kindness, e.g. the kind person creates an atmosphere of peace and goodwill for others and for himself, and is welcome wherever he goes. To admire a virtue in others is the first step towards resolving to acquire it oneself. Our admiration for each virtue will be increased if we consider how offensive and useless and destructive of happiness is its opposite. In the case we are considering, how offensive unkindness is, both to God and man, making them our enemies ; how useless too, for it helps no one ; and how often it ruins the happiness of a home and causes strife and division.

2. *The Heart must desire it.* When we perceive the excellence, utility and happiness of kindness, the heart will desire the formation of this habit in itself. We shall long to be kind in thought and word and deed and pray constantly to Him from Whom comes every good and perfect gift to bestow upon us this grace and to help us to form this habit. We shall learn to dislike, condemn and abhor whatever is unkind, first in ourselves, and then in others. We shall hate whatever needlessly wounds the feelings of others as well as the spirit which is indifferent to the sufferings of others.

3. *The Will must acquire it.* We must be careful not to be content with admiring virtue and vaguely desiring it. The wish of the heart must harden into a resolve of the will. There is a great difference between a sentimental wish and a determined will. The mind is the judicial activity of a person which forms estimates and judges values. The heart is the emotional activity which feels the attraction of virtue and the repulsion of vice. The will is the executive activity which controls action and regulates life. To be content with an ineffectual wish for a virtue, a mere sentiment or emotion, probably means

that we are not fully in earnest and not quite sincere. If we admire it we must desire it. If we desire it we must try to acquire it. The wish must harden into a will ; and the will must be an effectual will. An ineffectual will is one which does not take the necessary means to attain its end. An effectual will is one which takes the best means—and *all* the best means—to attain its end. These will become clear when we consider what hinders and what helps.

4. *What will hinder you ?* In trying to acquire a virtue, get a clear idea of the obstacles in the way ; e.g. in the case of kindness, what hinders you from being kind. It may be some sin of selfishness or sloth, love of comforts, fear of discomforts, censoriousness, the love of gossip, or of dwelling on the weaknesses of others. It may be temperament or disposition or habits which have hardened into second nature. It may be want of tact which makes you callous. (Tact means “touch”—sensitiveness to others’ feelings.) Or it may be want of imagination, because you seldom put yourself in another’s place and try to see the world as he sees it. When you have thought out what are the obstacles to acquiring some virtue, then think out the occasions. Such occasions may be negative or positive ; negative, i.e. any person, place or thing which makes it difficult for you to exercise the virtue : positive, i.e. any person, place or thing which gives you the opportunity of exercising the virtue. In the case of kindness, you will note what persons or what circumstances irritate you (negative), or what persons or opportunities of being kind you are neglecting (positive).

5. *What will help you ?*

i. *First, prayer*, constant and persevering, to God who is the only source of virtue,—especially to God

the Holy Spirit, whose special work it is to educate your soul.

ii. *Then the contemplation of examples of the virtue* in the life of Christ and in the lives of His Saints. Ask the saint who was most conspicuous for this virtue to help you with his prayers on your behalf.

iii. *Exercise.* Then the resolve to exercise this virtue deliberately, at least once every day. It was a holy inspiration which led the founders of the Boy Scouts to make it a rule to do a kind act every day. Such a rule, even if it is difficult to obey it perfectly, keeps the ideal always before a lad and so educates his soul to a higher level than if he had never thought about the matter.

iv. *Self-imposed penances* help to tonic the will. Penance imposed by others only test and train obedience to the Church or to one's director. Penance imposed by ourselves, if faithfully performed, strengthen the will for self-conquest. Except in cultivating the virtue of purity, when we must fly from every thought of the contrary, it is useful to confront ourselves again and again with the situation in which we fail to attain virtue, until the will at last forms a habit of conquering. General Nogi, the great Japanese warrior, told our boy scouts that he was not always brave or efficient: but that as a boy, when he found that he shrank from doing something which he ought to do, he used to force himself again and again to do this thing in practice until, when the call came to do it in earnest, his will was quite accustomed to conquering his habit of shrinking from it, and he could do it with ease.

Other methods have been pointed out in the Chapter on the Particular Examen.

MEDITATION ON THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS

Read S. Luke ii. 40 to end. Text, verse 49. Ask for the spirit of obedience, humility, and unselfishness at home.

Picture. 1. *The Great Temple at Jerusalem.* Vaster than any cathedral—its marble cloisters, massive pillars, cedar roof, rich ornaments, the smoke of the incense. Proud Pharisees, pilgrims from all countries, grave priests, a group of teachers; and in their midst *Jesus*, a boy of 12, eagerly questioning them, wondering, thinking.

2. *The Village of Nazareth.* Its streets and homes, the synagogue (church), a carpenter's shop. St. Joseph at work. Jesus helping and learning. Mary watching them. Hear the sound of the saw and hammer. Listen to the conversation of the Holy Family.

CONSIDER.

1. *Who is He that obeys?* The Son of God, who made the world. Whom does He obey? Mary, His holy Mother, and St. Joseph, His Guardian. *Why does He obey?* Because it is His duty. Thus He sets us an example of perfect Boyhood. *How does He obey?* Willingly, joyfully, perfectly, to the end—He became “obedient unto death” (Phil. ii. 8).

2. *Jesus grew in wisdom and stature as I grow* (verse 52). How good and *diligent* at His village school, how *eager* in searching the Scriptures! I am often idle, slothful, more eager to read foolish stories or passing news than to learn about God.

3. *What was His motive?* Eager, passionate longing to be about His Father's business, *to save the world*. We teach our children to love money, prosperity, worldly success, which lead so often to sordid and degraded lives.

What is my motive? Wealth, power, success, pleasure, luxury? Or duty, "my Father's business," to help to redeem the world?

4. *Jesus in His Home!* How bright He made it by His unselfishness, kind thoughtfulness for others, cheerfulness!

How often I make home unhappy by my tongue or temper—selfish, discontented, grumbling, inconsiderate!

5. *Jesus in His workshop!* How industrious, thorough, finished in all He did. No *honest* work is degrading. Every little commonplace duty is *great*, if done *for God's glory*.

Pray. For children at school, for Confirmation candidates, for boys and girls who have recently gone to work.

Resolve. To try to win my victory, first in my home, and in the midst of my family.

MEDITATION ON THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Read S. Luke iii. 1-22. *Text*, S. John i. 29. Ask for grace to repent and to keep your Baptismal promises.

Picture. *The Banks of Jordan.*

1. *John the Baptist*—rough and wild looking, stern, austere, self-denying, grieving *for the sins of the world*—fasting, praying, preaching, warning, *shaking souls*.

2. *The vast concourse*—listening, trembling, weeping, convicted—soldiers, taxgatherers, unbelievers, Pharisees—all *confessing their sins*, being baptized.

3. *Jesus*—saying good-bye to Mary, leaving home, *entering on His life's work*—listening to John's piercing

words, standing with sinners in the river for baptism. The Heavens open—the Voice of God—the Dove descending.

CONSIDER.

1. *The needs and sins of the world*—the prayerless, godless lives, selfishness, covetousness, luxury, lying, lust, drunkenness, ruin of souls. *The need of prophets* to teach, to protest. If I took sin more to heart and prayed more earnestly, God would raise up in me a saint like John to call men to repentance. Am I faithful in protesting against sin when I meet it ?

2. *Listen to the Baptist's cry* when he saw Jesus : "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Hear that cry echoed in every age, in every land, *each time* that Jesus comes to us in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood. He *alone* can save from sin.

3. *Jesus left Mother and Home* for my sake. God may mean *me* to leave home and money and all things *for love of Him*, to follow the Lamb, to help to save the world, to win His promised reward (S. Mark x. 29, 30) as a Priest or Missionary or Sister of Mercy.

4. *In my Baptism* I was born again as a child of God, set apart for God's service, to *do His work* in the world. In Jesus I am an adopted son of God. *Can God say of my* mean, selfish life each day, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" ?

5. *If I give myself altogether to God*, then in my meditations and prayers the *Heavens will open* : in my conscience I shall *hear His Voice* : in my will I shall *feel the strengthening* of His Holy Spirit.

Resolve. To forsake all and consecrate myself unreservedly to God's service and to the coming of His Kingdom.

MEDITATION ON THE TEMPTATION

Read S. Luke iv. 1-13. Text, Heb. iv. 15. Ask for strength to resist your special temptation.

Picture. *The Solitary Desert.* The awful silence—stillness—solitude—a few wild beasts prowling round. The lonely figure of *Jesus, worn and weak* from His long fast, lost in prayer and meditation as He contemplates His life's work, a world to be redeemed.

Satan drawing near to Him, strong, victorious over man—the Prince of this world, noiseless, subtle, cunning, *full of malice and hatred* against this new champion of God and man.

CONSIDER.

1. *Jesus was tempted* to make a wrong use of His divine powers. It is *not* sinful to be tempted. Satan tempts all who try to serve God. Sinful thoughts whispered by Satan only become *my* sins if I enjoy them and *allow them to remain* in my heart. "Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. li. 10).

2. *Jesus did not crush Satan by Divine power.* He conquered him, *as I must conquer*, by patience, relying on God's Word, *obeying His Voice* in the heart and by the strength of the Holy Spirit.

3. *Satan showed Jesus* all the kingdoms of the world *and the glory of them* (S. Matt. iv. 8)—promised Him universal empire *without suffering or the Cross*, if He

would do *one sinful act*. But God the Father showed Him all the kingdoms of the world *and their sorrows*: and Jesus turned from the Vision of Glory and chose the Vision of Tears. The world was to be redeemed by the Cross and a broken Heart, not by sinful force, pomp, power.

Do I love the glitter of the world, wealth, pomp, luxury, or to minister to the sick, poor, down-trodden, broken-hearted?

4. *Jesus*, having been tempted *in all points* as I am, knows how strong my temptation is, knows where I most need help. He feels for *me* and will be patient with my failures, *if I go on trying*.

5. *Temptation will not last for ever*. Satan can only tempt me during *this* life. In a few days or years, my *victory and crown!* and then no more fighting and hardship, no more falls. Each time I conquer, I grow stronger for my next conflict.

MEDITATION ON THE MISSION OF THE APOSTLES

Read S. Matt. ix. 36-x. 10. Text, S. Matt. xix. 21. Ask for grace and guidance to follow Jesus with a whole heart.

Picture—The Great Wide World.

1. *See the world* one vast plain—with *millions upon millions* of souls—souls, bound in chains of evil habits, blinded by ignorance, deceived by falsehood, burning with lust and passion, wallowing in filth, hardened by greed, crushed by selfish cruelty—many broken-hearted, in despair; *hear* the blasphemy, groans, cries of passion, sobs, prayers.

2. *See Satan* on his throne, surrounded by evil spirits and wicked men, *lavishing* gold, wealth, luxury on his followers, working through pride, falsehood, love of money, excitement, intoxicating drink.

3. *See Jesus*, poor, lonely, choosing and calling His Apostles, offering them a *Cross*, sending them out to rescue souls from Satan. *Hear Him speaking to you too!*

CONSIDER.

1. *Why did Jesus call them?* To help Him to redeem the world from the power of Satan. Jesus the Son of God *alone* can redeem the world and break Satan's power. But He chooses to make us "fellow-workers with Him" (2 Cor. vi. 1) in making that redemption effectual. He might have sent Angels to proclaim His Gospel. But He did not. He chose to do it through consecrated men and women. *Have I answered to His call?*

2. *To what did Jesus call them?* To a hard life of self-denial, to the forsaking of home, kindred, business, comfort. To *follow Him, obey Him, trust Him*. No bribes, but a cross with the promise of a crown. Is *my life* stern and simple, marked by the cross of *self-denial*?

3. *Millions leave home* and endure endless hardships, risks, loss of health, *to win perishing riches*. They *really* love riches. Do I *really* love Jesus? Am I ready to risk my life and trust His promise?

4. *What reward does He promise?* His dear Presence always with us, here and hereafter—sorrow turned into joy, eternal life, inexhaustible love of God. O my God, quicken me to desire Thee. My soul is athirst for Thee (Ps. xlii. 2).

5. *My election*. In my Baptism Jesus chose me to bear His Name and be His companion. He signed me

with the sign of the Cross that I should not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the Devil. I am one of His elect, His chosen ones—chosen to know Him and to make Him known. O my God, fill me with missionary zeal, with a thirst for souls and a passion for the coming of Thy Kingdom.

MEDITATION ON THE SACRED HEART

I. HIS HEART UNVEILED.

S. Matthew xi. 29. “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.”

1. “*Learn of Me.*” Our dear Lord wishes us to study His Sacred Heart. He does not shut Himself up in the proud reserve which will not admit even a close friend to know its secrets. Before the world He unveils His Heart. He draws back the veil which conceals His deepest feelings and asks us to look at His Heart and to learn what He feels; for we must feel it too.

2. “*In Heart.*” It is the Heart, and not the Head, which is the fountain of all true knowledge and wisdom. The Heart feels, and then the Head tries to analyse and explain the feeling. Science and philosophy are good, but quite secondary, methods of knowing. They are only the imperfect analysis of experience. The primary or fundamental knowledge is the knowledge of the Heart, the intuition by which alone personality can be known. We live and love long before we can explain what life and love really are—if we ever can explain these mysteries before we see our Saviour face to face.

3. *How to Learn. First, Attend.* Concentrate every power of heart and mind and will upon Jesus, Who is

really present by your side. Be still—quiet—not restless. Soon He will move a thought in your mind. Ask yourself, about all things, “What would Jesus think or feel or do or say?” *Secondly, Practise.* Exercise yourself in whatever virtue God suggests to you. Love can only be learned by loving; humility by the patient and joyful bearing of humiliations. Just as the muscles of the body need frequent exercise, so do the movements of the mind, the affections of the heart, and the decisions of the will.

II. MEEKNESS.

S. Matthew xi. 29. “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.”

1. *Meekness.* Meekness is one of that group of virtues which Christ introduced into the ideal of Man. It ranks with Poverty of spirit, Humility, and Mercy, as a virtue unknown to the heathen world at that time. “With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love” (Eph. iv. 2). “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance” (Gal. v. 22, 23).

2. *What is Meekness?* It is that temper of mind which is not easily provoked, and suffers injuries without desire of revenge, and quietly submits to what is inevitable, without fretfulness, gladly co-operating with the Will of God. It is the opposite of wrath, anger, fretfulness, irritability, querulousness, impatience, self-assertion. Examine yourself on each of these points. It does not come by accident, or from our nature or disposition. It can be, and must be, cultivated as we learn to have the Mind of Christ, and to bring every thought into subjection to Him. “Put ye also away all these: anger, wrath,

malice . . . put off the old man . . . put on the new . . . put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another" (Col. iii. 8-13). Put it on, by stern effort; don't wait for it to come.

3. *Meekness is not Weakness.* Weakness is the absence of power. Meekness is the restraint of power. Weakness in character means a will which is swept away by passion, without strength to restrain, guide or control the life. It excites our pity, but not our admiration. Meekness is the restraint of power, the highest development of strength. Force of character begins in the controlling and restraining of others, and reaches its highest point in controlling and restraining self. Meekness is the crown of self-control—the mark of a man who reigns as a king over even his inmost thoughts.

III. LOWLINESS.

S. Matthew xi. 29. "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."

1. *Lowliness, or Humility* is the virtue on which the Christian character must be built. Throughout the Bible it is described as the virtue which is most pleasing to God. "Surely He scorneth the scorners, but He giveth grace unto the lowly" (Prov. iii. 34). It is the virtue which is opposed to the vice pride in all its branches. Pride develops into self-love, self-assertion, self-will, desire for false independence, self-satisfaction, self-righteousness, undue self-consciousness, touchiness, boastfulness, censoriousness, contempt for others. Humility is the opposite of all these.

2. *The Christian Virtue.* Humility is pre-eminently the Christian virtue, because its value was underestimated

till Christ came, and because it is essential to Christian character. Humility is not to pretend that we are worse than we are, or that we cannot do what we can. This is falsehood, not humility, and it is often born of pride. To be humble is to see ourselves as we really are in God's sight. It is based on a true estimate of man's nature, as entirely dependent on God. How can you pride yourself on your beauty, riches, social position, intellectual power, virtue? "For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. iv. 7). Every talent, gift and power of body, mind and spirit, and every opportunity given is a gift from God; and to Him be all the glory.

3. *The Humility of God.* In man humility must of necessity have in it an element of penitence. He not only sees what he is: he also sees what he might have been, and what he ought to be. But when we speak of God as humbling Himself, we touch on an altogether different aspect of humility. The humility of God is that transcendent greatness which annihilates the distinction of great or small, many or few, and bestows Himself in fulness of love on all alike. God whose throne is so high exalted, yet "humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth" (Ps. cxiii. 6).

IV. HUMILITY.

Phil. ii. 5-7. "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant."

1. *God's Standard of Values.* God does not judge as man judges. Man's estimate of sin is often fixed by social

considerations alone. Men condemn those sins which are inconvenient to society. God's judgment will in many cases reverse the judgment of man. "The first shall be last, and the last first" (S. Mark x. 31). So the great love of the Son of God led Him first to lay aside the Divine glory in order that He might become man, and then to ignore all social estimates and to be born in great poverty. In this one great act of humility He condemns all class distinctions based on wealth, social position and power.

2. *He Emptied Himself.* The Son of God in becoming the Son of Man laid aside all the glory of Godhead, and accepted all the limitations of our human nature. He hung, a helpless infant, on His Mother's breast. He grew in stature as we grow. He learned with patience and perseverance as we learn. He was tempted as we are tempted. As man He wrestled with the Devil and overcame him. As man He wrought His wondrous works in the power of the Holy Spirit. As man He won His victory, using only the powers which God gives to man, in order that we might have in Him the triumphant assurance, that as He conquered so may we.

3. *The Form of a servant.* The Great Reversal. Man desires to rule. God desires to serve. Man desires to be waited on. God desires to wait on man. Man seeks wealth, honour, fame. God seeks poverty, contempt, obscurity. Man glories in grand titles and great numbers. God glories in the simplicity of the little child, and devotes Himself to each single soul that needs Him, and cherishes those whom man abandons, the outcasts of Society.

V. OBEDIENCE.

Phil. ii. 8. "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death."

1. *Obedience.* Throughout the Bible obedience to God is treated as the supreme virtue. It is the inner spirit without which outward worship is worthless. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. xv. 22).

It is *the cause* and *the condition* of salvation. "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous" (Rom. v. 19). "Though He was a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the Author (or cause) of eternal salvation" (Heb. v. 8, 9).

2. *The Value of Obedience.* Obedience is the only thing that God demands of us. He does not demand great talents, wealth, originality. He only asks obedience. For man's highest glory is to co-operate with God in redeeming and ruling the world. Man's *one* duty is to try to know and do the Will of God. The man who is self-willed is setting up another centre of originality in the world, apart from God. This is rebellion, and leads to all the many disasters of sin.

3. *Obedience is the Essence of Faith.* Faith is trust in a person. Saving faith is entire self-surrender to that person—God. The faith of Abraham lay in unquestioning obedience, which withheld nothing and feared nothing. Even so the Ideal Man (very God and very Man) Jesus

lived His life in unfailing obedience to the Will of God the Father. Sometimes we pride ourselves on originality,—“I thought of this,” “It was *my* idea, *my* plan.” Jesus eagerly disclaims this fatal spirit of false independence, and proclaims that all His thoughts and words and deeds come from the Father.

VI. SELF-SURRENDER.

S. Luke ii. 51. “He was subject unto them.”

1. *The Son of God* became a little child, and tells us, “Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven” (S. Matt. xviii. 3). The essence of the child-like character is (i.) To love. (ii.) To trust. (iii.) To obey. Test your life by these virtues.

2. *As a Boy*, Jesus was “subject” to His Mother Mary and His Guardian Joseph (S. Luke ii. 51).

3. *His Whole Life* was one eager response to the Will of God His Father.

It was the consecration of His Boyhood.

“Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?” (S. Luke ii. 49).

It was the purpose of His coming.

“I am come down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me” (S. John vi. 38).

It was His support in labour.

“My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to accomplish His work” (S. John iv. 34).

It was the motive of His life.

“I seek not Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me” (S. John v. 30).

It was His victory in temptation.

“ Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me ; nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done ” (S. Luke xxii. 42).

It is the very essence of His sacrifice.

“ Lo, I am come to do Thy will, O God ” (Heb. x. 7).

Remember that it is not the Lord's death, but His willingness to die, that is pleasing to God.

“ Obedient unto death ”—it is the obedience to the Father's will which is the sacrifice. Death is only the penalty of man's sin, the final test of the obedience and the seal of the perfect sacrifice.

4. *Examine your life by these points*, taking them separately one by one in turn. Are you self-willed, anxious to assert yourself without reference to the will of God ? Resolve to cultivate the habit of making acts of self-surrender until you habitually refer all things to God's will.

VII. DEPENDENCE.

S. John vi. 38. “ I am come down from Heaven, not to do Mine own Will, but the will of Him that sent Me.”

1. *True Independence*. There is a right independence which leads a man to do his best. God has not made man a helpless automaton. Man was created in the image of God, who has made him free to choose, or to refuse, to co-operate with Him. Therefore no man must depend on others to do for him what he can do for himself. God helps those who help themselves. To allow others to do for you what you can do for yourself is not humility, it is laziness. To expect God to do for you what you can do for yourself is not faith, it is presump-

tion. To expect God to reveal to you what you can find out for yourself by patient study, is not faith, but intellectual sloth.

2. *False Independence.* To try to live as though you were a single, solitary, isolated unit is gross selfishness. Your life is knit up into the life of others in a thousand ways. The whole world contributes to your life, and you are bound to give your best to the life of the world. This involves a loving recognition of every right relationship, and a fervent performance of every duty. Are you doing your best for your family, your town and your country, as a good son and a good citizen, and trying to leave the world better than you found it? The proud, or sensual, or ambitious man, aims at false independence, making himself, instead of God, the centre of his universe.

3. *Dependence.* Man is by nature a dependent creature, and the only truly manly attitude of the soul toward God is that of dependence.

In the sphere of physical and mental life, as long as men made self the centre of their universe, they made no progress in the conquest of nature. But as soon as they abandoned independence and tried to interpret God's Mind, and to co-operate with His Will in nature, they began to control its force. The same is true in the moral and spiritual sphere. God has a thought and purpose for your life, and your one desire must be to depend on Him for guidance and for control.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE.

S. Luke iv. 18. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor."

1. *Co-operation.* The process of the world is not by

chance. It is the unfolding of the thought of God in the working out of His eternal plan. God does not ask you to originate anything. He only asks you to answer when He calls, to obey when He commands, to correspond to His inspiration and to co-operate with His Will. The only thing man originates is sin. Our Lord, as Son of Man, passionately disclaims originativeness. He proclaims at every point His dependence on His Father.

2. *The Holy Spirit.* Jesus laid aside the glory and power of His own essential Godhead, and lived His life on earth as Man, using only such power as God gives to man. He receives the Holy Spirit at His Baptism (S. Luke iii. 22). He is "led by the Spirit" to His temptation (S. Luke iv. 1). He "returns in the power of the Spirit" to begin His ministry (S. Luke iv. 14). He claims the Holy Spirit as the Source of His Inspiration (S. Luke iv. 18). By the Spirit of God He casts out devils (S. Matt. xii. 28). "God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts x. 38); and it was "through the Eternal Spirit" that He "offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14). All that He might have done in His own power as Son of God He did in the power of the Spirit as Son of Man, in order to teach us to depend on the Holy Spirit, and that as He conquered in our own nature, using only our own weapons, so we may conquer too. Are you leading the life of one who depends habitually and instinctively on the Holy Spirit dwelling within you? Do you seek His guidance, trust His strength, accept His suggestions, obey His commands, place yourself in entire dependence on Him, absolutely under His control?

3. *Waiting on the Father.* Our Lord lived every moment of His life on earth in loving dependence on the

Father's Will. Without haste and without hesitation He allowed His life to unfold itself under the pressure of Divine destiny, waiting on His Father to know when to act, and what to think or say or do. Are you calmly waiting on God in quiet peaceful assurance that it is for Him to guide and overrule your life? Or are you worried, wilful, wayward, over-anxious, fussy?

IX. CO-OPERATION.

S. Luke iv. 18. "He hath sent Me to proclaim release to the captives."

1. *The Sense of Mission.* When God created you and elected you in your Baptism to co-operate with Him in the redemption of His world, He had a plan and purpose for your life which He will disclose to you step by step if you wait patiently on Him. The knowledge that God has sent you into the world for a definite purpose and will overrule your life if you will let Him do so, is the secret of a strong, calm, peaceful life. Jesus moved moment by moment under the sense of Mission, and He wishes us to do the same. "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" (S. John xx. 21).

2. *His Time is not His own.* He waits on God His Father to know the hour to act. "Woman . . . Mine hour is not yet come" (S. John ii. 4). "Jesus knowing that His hour was come" (S. John xiii. 1).

Much of God's work in the Church and in your life is spoilt by the misguided zeal which acts before God wills, or else by the sloth which is not eagerly watching for the destined hour. Beware of the impatience which will not wait for the hour of God, "the fulness of the time" (Gal. iv. 4), as well as of the sloth which will not act until the hour is gone for ever. "Too late."

3. *His Thoughts and Words and Deeds.* "I can of Myself do nothing ; as I hear, I judge " (S. John v. 30). "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me " (S. John vii. 16). "The word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me " (S. John xiv. 24). "The works which the Father hath given Me to accomplish " (S. John v. 36).

At every point, in thought, word and deed, our Lord lived in conscious loving correspondence with His Father's Will. Every night before retiring, try your thoughts, and words, and deeds, by this test, and ask Him to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, to bring you into tune with His Heart, and Mind, and Will.

LECTURE ON ENTIRE CONSECRATION

Three men were sick of a serious illness. All of them wished to get well. The first one wished it apparently as much as the others. But he would not use the remedies, nor submit to the discipline which would have restored him to health. He remained ill, in spite of his desire to be well. The second man used some of the remedies and submitted to some of the discipline necessary to his restoration. He was partly cured. The third one was in deadly earnest about getting well. Hence he used all the means, and the very best means, to get well, and eagerly adopted the best discipline for the regulation of his life. He was soon restored to perfect health. If you are in earnest in following Christ, you will adopt not some but all of the best means for conquering your besetting sin, and will choose the best means, as the Holy Spirit guides you, to consecrating your life to God and to His service.

Our Lord points out in S. Matthew xix. 16-22 that there

are two ways of following Him. When the rich young man asked Him, "Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Our Lord answered, "If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments." The young man said, "All these things have I observed: what lack I yet?" Jesus said, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me." In these verses, and in other passages of the same chapter which bid men to abandon marriage and live the celibate life "for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake" (verses 11, 12), or "for My sake, and for the gospel's sake" (S. Mark x. 29), our Lord puts before us the two Ways of following Him—the Way of the Commandments and the Way of the Precepts, which is technically called the Religious Life.

The Religious Life of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience is simply an emphatic form of the Baptismal life. All Christians are called to perfection. Some are called to strive after perfection by consecrating the normal life, others by abandoning it. All the baptized are called to consecrate their possessions to God. Some are called to use them as careful stewards of God's property, others to abandon them for Christ's sake. All are called to live chaste lives. Some are called to lay aside the legitimate life of marriage and to consecrate themselves to virginity. And to this life of special consecration our Lord attaches very precious promises. "There is no man that hath left home, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for My sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (S. Mark x. 29, 30). Then He adds,

to warn Religious against pride and presumption, "But many that are first shall be last, and the last first" (verse 31).

These two degrees of consecration, the Baptismal and the Religious, may be illustrated from our Army organization before the War. Some men enlisted in the regular Army and some in the Territorial Force, for Home Service only. All soldiers alike were called to be brave and obedient. But some—the Territorials—prepared themselves for the defence of their country while remaining at home. Others, the Regulars, felt called to leave their homes and dear ones, and to place themselves entirely at the service of their country to go anywhere in the world whither they might be sent. These, the Regulars, abandoned all the joys and responsibilities of home life so as to be entirely at the disposal of their country, and were gathered together in barracks, and highly trained in the various arts of War.

So in the Holy Catholic Church, the Army of the Lord of hosts and God of battles, Christ calls all His followers to take their part in the Holy War against sin and Satan. Some will do this by consecrating the natural life, others by abandoning it. These latter are gathered together in monasteries and convents to be especially trained in the arts of our great warfare. Our Lord put this twofold call before all His followers, and left it to the selection of love which manner of life they would choose. For in recommending celibacy "for the kingdom of heaven's sake" He says "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it" (S. Matt. xix. 12). All must serve Him with entire consecration. Some would desire to be free from the cares and anxieties of normal married life so that they might "attend upon the Lord without distraction" (1 Cor. vii. 35).

Again, within the general call which He leaves to our own selection, He has a special call for certain individuals whom He has marked out for special service. When a General has a task of special peril to perform, some forlorn hope, he explains its nature to his men and calls for volunteers. Thank God, often the whole regiment offers itself. Then the General chooses out of those who volunteer certain men whom he thinks are especially suited to the task. These he brings into the most intimate union with himself; he explains to them his plans and entrusts to them the fulfilment of his will. So with the call to the Religious Life.

Our Lord is the Commander-in-Chief of the Holy Catholic Church, the Army of God. Some men He selects for special work as He chose the twelve Apostles and S. Paul who is "a chosen vessel unto Me" (Acts ix. 15). To others He explains the nature of this adventure and leaves it to their love and zeal to volunteer for the work. From their ranks, during the testing of the novitiate, He chooses those who are especially fitted for the work and manner of life. These He brings into special intimacy with Himself. From the Apostolic band He chose SS. Peter and James and John to be His most intimate companions "to be entrusted with the sight of His marvellous acts (in the raising of Jairus' daughter), with the secret of His hidden glory (on the Mount of the Transfiguration) and with the inner mystery of His Passion (in the Garden of Gethsemane)."

Therefore each converted soul ought definitely to ask itself "How does God wish me to serve Him? Does He will that I should serve Him in the normal life at home? Or is He calling me literally to forsake all that I may follow Him in the Religious Life as a Sister of Mercy or a Friar or a Monk?" This you can only find out by the

constant prayer "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" To some souls God makes His will overwhelmingly clear. With others He leaves it to the decision of their best judgment. You must weigh in the balance of your judgment the needs of home and your duties to others. Some men at the beginning of the war against Germany longed to volunteer to go to the front, but had to stay at home to support a mother. Then you must weigh the needs of the Church; whether there is a special need and therefore a special call for more priests, missionaries, friars, monks, or (if you are a woman) for nuns, sisters of Mercy, or women missionaries.

The need for the revival of the Religious Life in the Church of England to-day is very great. Almost without exception, the parishes where Sisters are at work are most richly blessed, the altars thronged with devout communicants, the poor loved and cared for. Many Orders of Religious, both of men or women, have become burning centres of spiritual life, and fountains of revival for the Church. Their amazing activities embrace the world in a network of prayer, worship, intercession, which is their first duty. This life of Prayer has been most fruitful in every activity of the Church's life, in literature and scholarship, in parishes, schools, hospitals, colleges and foreign missions. But this life and work could be multiplied a thousandfold, if more men and women would listen to the call of Christ and consecrate themselves to Him in this way "for My sake and the gospel's sake." It is not that God does not call. The needs of the Church *are* His call. It is that men will not listen.

The Church needs Religious Orders of teachers in every grade, in Elementary and Secondary Schools as well as in the Universities. She needs many more

Colleges for the free training of boys for the Priesthood, with Hostels at all the new Universities. She needs thousands of Friar Preachers to supplement the work of the parish priests. She needs thousands of Religious, both men and women, in the Mission Field, where in India and Africa whole tribes and nations are applying for teachers and are being lost because we have none to send. The mission work of the Church has been done in an inefficient way, such as no good business firm would tolerate for a moment. It has, till recently, been regarded as the hobby of a few eccentric and kind-hearted men, instead of being looked on as the first essential duty of every Christian. Compare the passionate beat of the heart of our Empire which supports our soldiers fighting our battles in France and on every battlefield with the lukewarm support we give to our missionaries, and we shall see how much more in earnest we are over worldly affairs than over the coming of the Kingdom of God.

But the War between Christ and Satan for the souls of men is too intense, too urgent, to be entrusted any longer to kind-hearted but inefficient amateurs. The World has organized its commerce on the lines of scientific efficiency. Each great firm has an army of managers, commercial travellers and salesmen, who are skilled in persuasion and eager to seize every opportunity for extending their business. Satan is served by men who devote every energy of their souls to the spread of falsehood and the corruption of innocence. Christ and His Church must be served with at least a like enthusiasm for efficiency. "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets!" (Numbers xi. 29). Christ needs an army of converted men and women who will make the coming of His Kingdom the one devouring passion of their lives. Some will do this at home by the consecration

of the natural life. Others will do it in Religious Orders by the assertion of the supernatural life. To which is He calling you ?

In some cases the claims of the home and your duty to your relatives are so imperative that you are not free to devote yourself to the Religious Life. In other cases a person's temperament and health and character are such that he will serve God better in consecrating the natural life at home. But in every case each soul should consider the call to the Religious Life, and ask himself, "Am I free to consecrate myself to God in this way ? Or is it my duty to God to remain at home ?" If, with a pure intention for God's glory and the coming of His Kingdom, you do your best to form a right judgment, God will make His will for you clear to you. But in whatever way you are called upon to serve Him, you must offer to Him a service which is at the highest level of efficiency of which you are capable. No careless or slothful or inefficient work can be acceptable to God. You must never offer Him your second best. You must not be content to receive all that Christ does for you, and do as little as you can for Him in return. He left all for your sake : you must meet His boundless generosity in the same spirit, that of entire consecration to His service.

REVIVAL OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

O God, Who renewest in these latter days Thy mercies of ancient times ; speed onward the restoration of Community Life : that those whom Thou hast called may be true to their calling ; and that many more, forsaking all for Jesu's sake, may consecrate themselves to a life of entire surrender, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

Ant. Ye have not chosen me, but I chose you and appointed you.

Ÿ. Ye shall be witnesses unto Me.

R7. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

Let us pray.

O Lord, Who didst admit to special intimacy with Thyself the chosen three among Thy twelve Apostles ; call many even now both of men and women, to share the like privilege in the Religious Life : that they, being entrusted with the sight of Thy marvellous acts, with the secret of Thy hidden glory, and with the inner Mystery of Thy Passion, may by example and by deed uphold Thine honour and extend far and wide the dominion of Thy Majesty : Who livest and reignest with the Father and Holy Ghost ever one God, world without end.

MEDITATION ON THE TWO STANDARDS

Read. 1. *The Call of Christ.* S. Matthew x. 32-39 ; xvi. 24. S. Mark viii. 34. S. Luke vi. 12-26 ; xiv. 26.

2. *The Apostolic Life.* 1 Corinthians iv. 9-13. 2 Corinthians iv. 8-11 ; vi. 1-10.

Picture. The World a vast plain. *To the Left hand*—Babylon, the city of Confusion, before which Satan has set up his standard. *See* the glare of torches, the glitter of gold, the fountains of wine, the flash of jewels. *Hear* the yells of coarse laughter, the cries of wrath, the mocking at virtue, the seductive music, the clink of dice, the whirl of the dance. Watch many young lads and girls flocking to his standard.

To the Right hand—Jerusalem, the City of Peace, before which Jesus has set up His standard, the Holy Cross. See Him beckoning to *you* and calling you by name.

CONSIDER.

1. *The Object of the War.* Satan passionately desires to ensnare, enslave and ruin you—to destroy your soul and all souls. The ruin of innocence, the blasting of a soul, is his one aim and only joy. Jesus comes “to seek and to save that which was lost” (S. Luke xix. 10). You should be inflamed with a passion to save souls by thinking of (i) the deadly hatred of Satan; (ii) the eager burning love of Jesus; (iii) the splendour of this work in itself, the glory of God, the beauty of the soul saved.

2. *The Two Standards.*

i. *The Standard of Satan*—on which is written *self-love, self-indulgence, self-assertion*. Around him is gathered a countless host of evil spirits, fallen angels, unclean spirits haunting innocence to destroy it, lying spirits who blind and deceive men and nations, earth-bound souls of the departed who were sensualists; and allied to these, the souls of all those who make a trade of vice and tempt others.

ii. *The Standard of Christ*—on which are inscribed the words *Poverty, Chastity and Obedience*. Around Him are gathered the good angels, a countless host, who minister to men. There too are the ever-increasing ranks of the redeemed, Our Lady, the Queen of Heaven, the glorious company of Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles who have taught the Truth; the noble army of Martyrs whose courage has conquered death; the shining band of Virgins whose undefiled chastity has quenched the flames of lust.

With them are allied an innumerable company of Priests and Religious and faithful Communicants who are serving in the firing line of the Church on earth, together with all who truly love and serve their Saviour—men and women, boys and girls.

3. *The Two Generals.*

i. *Satan* addresses his followers : “ If you join my standard, I can promise you a good time ; plenty of money, pleasures, power. You will be free from all restraint of dull morality. All you have to do is to follow your desires. This is the true way to make the best of your life ; the real road to self-realization is self-indulgence. I have only one rule for my army. It is ‘ Please yourself.’ ”

ii. *Christ* addresses His followers : “ If any man willeth to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it : and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life ? ” (S. Matt. xvi. 24–26). There is only one path to Victory. Self-denial is the only way to self-control. Self-indulgence is the certainty of self-destruction. Self-sacrifice is the only way to self-realization. If you would follow Me you must live as I lived and do what I command you to do.”

4. *The Two Methods.*

i. *Satan's method of warfare* is by *Falsehood*. His host of evil spirits breathe out a poisonous gas which blinds, chokes, suffocates and intoxicates souls so that they become bewildered with illusions, delirious with passion, drugged into insensibility. These evil spirits hypnotize or mesmerize a man, until he

loses his will-power, and lives in a world of illusion. They gradually ensnare a soul with love of pleasure and love of comfort, until it sinks down into a sloth which is incapable of generous action. They poison the wells of truth until every ideal has become perverted. They deride the Christian ideals as "slave morality" fit only for the mean-spirited.

ii. *Christ's method of warfare* is by *Truth*. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (S. John viii. 32). He breathes the Holy Spirit upon His Church; and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 17). He shatters every falsehood which deceives, and dissolves every prejudice which blinds. He brings souls out into the sunlight of God's presence which shrivels up every lie. He breathes the Holy Spirit into every soul, to enlighten the blinded mind, to strengthen the weakened will, and to kindle the cold heart. And He works through consecrated souls to redeem others from the power of Satan.

5. *Choose between the Two Standards*. Realize that if you are living in wilful sin, you are definitely fighting under Satan's banner against Christ: you are strengthening the power of sin in the world: you are helping to poison the spiritual atmosphere. And Christ stands opposite to you now and looks down into your eyes and calls you to His Standard. Have you the courage to be free? Choose.

If you have been half-hearted,—a waverer, lukewarm in your service to God, tampering with occasions of sin—choose now. "See, I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed" (Deut.

xxx. 15, 19). "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings xviii. 21).

If you have long ago chosen Christ with all your heart, then consider how you may serve Him with more fervour, how you can make your consecration more perfect and entire.

6. *The sure Victory.* Millions of souls redeemed, glorifying God on the earth, and surrounding His Throne in Heaven. What part will *you* take in this battle? What share will you have in this victory? How have you fought your battle? Have you been a coward, a traitor, a sluggard, timid, lukewarm, slothful? Or brave, eager, concentrated, zealous, enthusiastic, disciplined, crucified? Look into the face of Jesus, and be generous in your self-sacrifice and devotion to His Person and service.

MEDITATION ON THE CROSS OF CHRIST

Read S. Luke xxiii. 33-49. *Picture* the Cross of Christ on Calvary.

CONSIDER.

1. *Why Jesus Christ Suffered.* Because this was the only way to save your soul. Only by this obedience "unto death" could Satan's power be broken, the perfect Sacrifice of a sinless life be offered, and you rescued and awakened to know, love, and serve God. Gaze at the Cross; see, touch the nails and thorns and drops of Blood. Hear the mocking, yelling, blasphemy. Listen to His heavy breathing and sighing. Say often "For me, dear Jesus, for me."

2. *How He Suffered.* With eagerness and joy. "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. xii. 2 ; see also S. Luke xii. 50). You, your love, your tears of penitence, your devotion, your zeal in His service—you are the joy that was set before Him. To see you rescued from Satan, liberated from sin, restored to peace and the love of God ; it was for you that He counted suffering a joy. Will you not do the same for Him ?

3. *What He Suffered.* (1) *In His Body*, in every nerve and muscle, of every sort, weariness, weakness, torture, scourging, blows on the face, biting ropes, blunt nails, sharp thorns, hunger, thirst, sleeplessness, heat,—for you ! How can you, then, shrink from discomfort ! (2) *In His Honour.* See the spittle trickling down the face of the Eternal, Almighty, All-Holy God. Hear Him derided as mad, a blasphemer, an impostor, a deceiver possessed by a devil. Feel what He felt at the kiss of Judas, the desertion of His Apostles, the denial of Peter, the preference for Barabbas, the loneliness and desolation. All this borne gladly for you ! How can you fear and shrink from humiliations or seek honours ? (3) *In His Heart.* So sensitive, gentle, loving—a heart that yearns for sympathy ! What cruel ingratitude ! He is betrayed, forsaken and denied by friends, hated by leaders of religion, condemned by the mob, despised by the Roman soldiers ; yet He denies Himself even the consolation of His blessed Mother's presence. Alone ! heart-broken ! dying ! dead ! for you !

"O Jesus, help me to repay Thy trust and love. Give me courage to embrace my cross daily, and to bear it joyfully after Thee."

4. *His Self-restraint.* "Who, when He was reviled,

reviled not again ; when He suffered, threatened not ” (1 S. Peter ii. 23).

Meekness. Behold your Lord as He passes through His Passion, and try to feel what He feels, and ask Him to form in you the same temper of meekness.

Feel what He felt :—

- (a) When Judas kissed Him.—What restraint of loathing ! What a gentle rebuke !
- (b) When the disciples forsook Him.—No cry of disappointment !
- (c) When the temple guards roughly seized Him.—No resistance !
- (d) When an officer struck Him.—The gentle remonstrance !
- (e) When false witnesses accused Him.—He held His peace !
- (f) When accused of blasphemy.—Still silent !
- (g) When spitted on, blindfolded, buffeted, reviled.—No cry of pain !
- (h) When Peter denied Him.—No reproach !
- (i) When scourged, crowned with thorns and crucified.—Only a prayer for His murderers. “ Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do ” (S. Luke xxiii. 34).

Thus He illustrates His teaching : “ Blessed are the meek,” “ Love your enemies ” (St. Matt. v. 5, 44).

Pray. O Jesu, meek and lowly, Thou knowest my heart, for to Thee all hearts are open, all desires known. By Thy most sacred Passion, cast down in me all haughtiness of pride ; destroy all arrogance, melt in the flames of Thy love my hard and stubborn heart. Subdue all

bitterness of spirit which is contrary to sincere love. Calm the troubled risings of impatience. Repress and quell the wild impulses and madness of anger. Root out and destroy the evil motions of wicked lusts. O Jesu, meek and lowly in heart, make my heart like Thy Sacred Heart this day and through eternity.

LECTURE ON THE THREE DEGREES OF DEVOTION

In following our Lord we can trace three degrees of devotion and courage. *The first degree of devotion* consists in submitting ourselves without the slightest reservation to the Law of God : so that we would refuse the empire of the world and be prepared even to sacrifice our lives rather than deliberately break any commandment of God. This degree of devotion is required of all Christians when in our Baptism we “renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.” It is not a high degree of devotion. It is the least that men can do if they wish to follow Christ.

The second degree of devotion is to be quite indifferent to riches or poverty, honour or disgrace, health or sickness, a long life or a short one in the service of our dear Lord ; so that no consideration of personal comfort or of personal gain shall be able to distract us from perfect loyalty to our Master. This requires great detachment and devotion, and is a high degree of courage. It means that loyalty to Christ must give us courage to stand alone, ready to lose all that the world holds most dear,—the love of relations and friends, the society of those whose companionship we most value—rather than be

silent when God bids us speak out boldly against some evil, or say smooth things when He bids us to denounce what is contrary to His will.

By way of illustration we may take such instances as these :—The State in England sanctions the adultery of those persons who are divorced and go through the form of marriage with another person while their real partner is still living. It needs much courage for a Christian in what is called “good society” to refuse to mix with relatives or friends who are thus living in adultery. But loyalty to Christ demands that if we would have Him as our Friend, we must abandon the friendship of those who are thus living in open sin.

Again, a politician sees some evil in the State which he ought to denounce, such as the tyranny of the Trade in Intoxicating Drink, which brings such widespread ruin on our race. But if he speaks the prophetic word which God inspires against this highly organized and degrading traffic, the Trade at once tries to bribe him into silence or threatens to ruin his political career if he continues to denounce this evil. He needs much courage to sacrifice all his hopes of a great career. But loyalty to Christ demands that he shall be indifferent to poverty or wealth, to honour or dishonour, sooner than remain silent when God bids him speak.

Again, a Bishop in his diocese, or a priest in his parish, may become aware of some social evil which ought to be denounced. If he is content to be tactfully silent, the wealthy evildoer will help and applaud him ; but he will lose the Friendship of Christ. If he speaks up boldly for God and is a prophet of righteousness in championing the cause of the poor, he will almost certainly have to face social ostracism, the loss of all preferment, and that silent pressure which may even ruin his work. But

loyalty to Christ demands that he must be indifferent to poverty or wealth, to success or failure ; and if he is loyal, he will have Christ for his Friend.

Once again, a young man has a brilliant career at the University. All that the world can give him lies at his feet. But God calls him to be a Missionary in a land where the climate is unhealthy. He needs great courage to turn his back on all that the world offers him of wealth and honour, health, with the probability of a long life, to resist the pleading of his friends and relatives and to face poverty, obscurity, isolation, sickness, and—probably—a short life rather than a long one in the Master's service. But loyalty to Christ demands this sacrifice from him.

In all cases we must distinguish between this fearless loyalty to Christ and the sinful taint in us which may mar our work for Him. Some "speak the truth in love" (Ephes. iv. 15) and suffer for it. They are of the noble army of martyrs. Others speak the truth without love, and their unpopularity is largely due to their own disagreeable nature. Such are not martyrs, suffering the reproach of Christ, but sinners suffering the righteous penalty for their sins, and bringing reproach on Christ.

The third degree of Devotion is to prefer to be poor and despised and outcast, if this will be for God's greater glory ; to choose poverty instead of wealth, obscurity instead of honour, and sickness instead of health, if this will enable us to be more like Christ or more capable of perfectly fulfilling His will. We are not required in this most generous degree of devotion to pretend that we like poverty more than wealth, or shame more than honour, or sickness more than health ; such a pretence would be a falsehood which would misrepresent God's will. It is only asked that we should prefer these things if they will

enable us to fulfil God's will more perfectly. For instance, consider a practical case which happened twenty years ago. A rich young man of high spirits and generous nature was converted from a careless life to a life of consecration to Jesus Christ. He asked, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and the answer came to him clearly. He sold his hounds and hunters, was ordained priest and sailed for the leper island, the saddest and most miserable spot on the face of the earth, where all the inhabitants (except those in charge) are lepers, lunatics or convicts. He did not do this because he preferred poverty to wealth, or sickness to health, or a short life to a long one. He did it because he felt certain that it was God's will for him and because his boundless love for Christ exalted his devotion to the highest degree of self-abandoning loyalty to his Master. Some may ask, "Is not such a degree of devotion exaggerated? Would not common sense and moderation give a man a more balanced judgment?" Yes, they probably would. But our Lord never bade us be moderate in our consecration to His service, or to guide our actions by the common sense judgments of the world. He especially taught His followers to despise the estimates of the world, to desire none of its rewards nor fear its hatred or contempt. "Blessed are ye poor . . . ye that hunger . . . that weep. . . . Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy : for behold, your reward is great in heaven : for in the same manner did their fathers to the prophets. Woe unto you that are rich . . . full . . . laugh. . . . Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you ! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets " (S. Luke vi. 20-26).

Our Lord did not want soft, comfort-loving, mean-spirited men to be His followers. He wanted men of high spirit who had courage and a spirit of adventure—men who would rise to the call of danger and who would so conquer the fear of contempt and suffering and death that they would be invincible—iron-sides who would laugh at what other men dread. His soldiers were to conquer the world for Him, and He must be sure of their loyalty and devotion to His Person. The enemy will try to bribe them with riches, honours, comforts and pleasures, and to terrify them with poverty, contempt and persecution. If only they will despise what the world values and desire what the world dreads, they will then be invincible. He will not ask them to suffer what He Himself has not suffered first. So beneath their very eyes He passes through the worst sufferings of body, mind and spirit that hell can invent or man endure, unmoved in His serenity, unshaken in His patience, unswerving in His loyalty to His Father's Will; nay, through death itself and a death awful enough to break His Heart, though it *could not bend His will*.

Before cleaving His victorious way through every temptation and every suffering, and triumphantly trampling under foot the broken power of Satan, He warned His followers that He should expect the same invincible patience from them in the strength which He would bestow on them. "A disciple is not above his master, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore" (S. Matt. x. 24-26).

Their loyalty to Him must know no bounds. His claim upon their devotion is supernatural. It transcends

all the claims of nature. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (S. Matt. x. 37).

Sore trials await His followers. "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God" (S. John xvi. 2).

"Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for My name's sake. . . . But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (S. Matt. xxiv. 9, 13).

And what He claimed He won. In the power of the Spirit the Apostles presented to adversity a will which no bribe could seduce and no torment could intimidate. They loved suffering for His sake. They flung down their proud challenge to the world, "We must obey God rather than men," and after being scourged "they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the Name" (Acts v. 29, 41).

And that flaming torch of the love of Jesus passed from the hands of the Apostles to the Martyrs who, laughing at death, passed it on to legions of Missionaries who, forsaking home and native land for His sake, have passed it on to you and me. We must not let its flame grow dim.

The third degree of devotion is an ideal which was realized by S. Paul. He felt keenly the contempt of men and he gloried in it. "Let us rejoice in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience" (Rom. v. 3). "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's

sake : for when I am weak, then am I strong " (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10). " Howbeit what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ . . . that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death ; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead " (Phil. iii. 7-11).

When therefore we claim that the highest degree of devotion to our Lord will prefer poverty, tribulation and contempt to wealth, comfort and honour if the glory of God can be equally served in either case, it will be seen that we are not setting up an impossible ideal. It is an ideal to which S. Paul and some of the greatest attained. We ourselves may be far below the level of a heroism so generous and a self-surrender so perfect. But the soul is educated by aiming at the highest : and if we fail quite to reach it, the striving upward towards a high ideal will strengthen us to reach a higher degree of devotion than if we were content with a lower aim. If we begin with a desire to avoid poverty, contempt and suffering in the service of Christ, we shall surely fail when the hour of trial comes. But if we begin with a sincere desire to share the poverty of Christ, the world will not be able to bribe us with its wealth. If we begin with a sincere desire to share the obscurity and contempt of Him who was "despised and rejected of men," the world will not be able to tempt us with its honours. If we begin with a sincere desire to share His suffering and His shame, then we shall be strong and patient when the shame and suffering come.

MEDITATION ON THE RESURRECTION

Read S. John xx. Picture The Risen Christ amidst His Apostles in the Upper Chamber.

CONSIDER.

1. *The Happiness of Jesus.* He had made His Sacrifice, had given up riches, pleasures, honours, health, and Life itself in order that He might do God's will with perfect obedience. He who three days ago was an out-cast, looked on with contempt and hatred, hanging on the Cross, with mangled body and broken heart, now stands before them victorious, triumphant, having all power in heaven and earth, the Conqueror of Sin and Death. Pray for courage to despise riches, honours, pleasures, comforts, health and life itself, except in so far as they may be for God's glory.

2. *The Certainty of Victory.* Jesus stands before His Apostles and before you, to assure you of the certainty of victory if you follow in His footsteps of self-denial. "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 12). S. Paul describes the Apostolic life. "We are made as the filth of the world, the off-scouring of all things, even until now" (1 Cor. iv. 13). And yet no names in history are so highly exalted or so deeply loved as those of the Apostles. Yes, the Victory is certain, if you have the courage to suffer.

3. *The Greatness of the Reward.* Poverty, humiliation, discomforts, sufferings, temptations, sickness are only for a short time, for fifty years at most, perhaps only for five. But the reward! Here in the midst of suffering, to grow daily more like Jesus, to come nearer to Him, to have Him as your daily companion, to know how pleased He is to see your fervent zeal and devotion. And

beyond the grave to see Him face to face, to hear His "Well done."

4. *His supreme Authority.* See Him on the mountain top in Galilee. Hear Him address His Apostles. "All authority hath been given unto Me in Heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world" (S. Matt. xxviii. 18). This is His great commission which has come down with the assurance of His Presence to you. The Christian life is one lived in joyful eager obedience to a present living and loving Saviour, who expects you to consecrate yourself entirely to His service.

O Jesu, grant, I pray Thee, that I may not disappoint Thine expectation. Illuminate my darkened mind, strengthen my weak will, enkindle my cold heart. Fill me with missionary zeal. Burn up my selfishness and sloth. Use me to win other souls for Thee. Thou art my King. Help me to be loyal and devoted to Thee and to Thy service. Take me for Thine own. Do with me what Thou wilt. Send me whithersoever I may best fight in this glorious warfare. Keep me in Thy Presence. Fill me with Thy love.

THE UNITIVE WAY

Introduction. The Way of Purification is meant to purify the soul from sin, and from disorderly affections and inordinate desires. Thus it liberates it from the power of sin and from the chains of evil habits.

The Way of Illumination aims at enlightening the mind and enriching it by fastening its attention on the Person of our dear Lord as the revelation of the character of God and the example for the life of man; and it encourages us in the Imitation of Christ.

The Way of Unity aims at bringing the soul into that union with God which is Eternal Life.

It must be remembered that these are not three separate ways, each one of which is to be pursued alone. It is one Threefold Way. In normal life they are concurrent processes, not consecutive operations. Each day there is need of, and scope for, each process. Moreover, the order is often reversed. The Vision of Christ is, in many cases, the secret of conviction of sin; and our fundamental union with God by Baptism is the motive of our loathing of sin. But while the processes are really concurrent, it is useful at times to treat them as consecutive, as in the life-long process of sanctification the emphasis is gradually shifted from the way of purification to that of unity. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that the greatest saint has need of Penitence, just as the greatest sinner needs the union with God which enables him to repent. All that this division of the subject means

is that, as the soul grows in the Friendship of God, the emphasis is changed from attrition to contrition, from the selfish fear of what the consequences of sin may be to ourselves, to the holy fear lest we wound the Love of God : from a slave's desire to be free to a son's yearning to be worthy of his Father's love.

We have placed the meditation on the Holy Eucharist at the beginning of the Unitive Way, for three reasons :—

1. The Holy Eucharist is not merely a fact of the past but a living power in the present. While the institution of the Sacrament strictly belongs, as an historical event, to the earthly life of our Lord, its wondrous power belongs to His continuous Heavenly activity.

2. It is pre-eminently the Sacrament of Unity by which God unites men to Himself and to one another in Him.

3. There is much need to-day for guarding against a Pantheistic Mysticism—vague but wide-spread—which imperils the spiritual lives of many and contradicts the fundamental teaching of Christianity. This vague atmospheric Mysticism treats all Religion as though it were merely spiritual, the union of the individual soul with God and nothing more : and, if it treats with Sacraments at all, it often regards them merely as a means to this end, the crutches of a cripple, the scaffolding of a temple which can be dispensed with when the soul has come into conscious union with its Maker. This attitude of mind seems to be a denial of three vital truths of the Christian religion.

For (a) Redemption in the Christian Gospel is meant to embrace the whole universe, physical as well as spiritual. (b) And Christianity is pre-eminently the religion of the body, not merely of the soul. God claims

that we shall consecrate our bodies to His service at the same time as He sanctifies our souls. (c) Moreover, Christianity is essentially corporate and not individual. Men are to be saved by being incorporated into a fellowship. For these reasons, the Mysticism which finds its consummation in the union of the individual soul with God cannot be regarded as Christian: and the Sacraments which unite the material and the spiritual and are essential to fellowship cannot be treated as helps which may be transcended, props to be left behind by the soul as it moves on the higher plane of unity.¹

The Way of Unity encourages us to persevere in a life-long effort to unite ourselves to God by the faithful use of Sacraments and by that perfect self-surrender which we call Faith which enables God to flood us with His life and love. By the operation of the Holy Spirit He transforms us into the likeness of His Son. The *aim* of the Unitive Way is entire and abiding consecration: the *fruit* of the Way is love, joy, peace; and the *end* of the Way lies in the Heart of God, in that place which Jesus has prepared for us.

MEDITATION ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Read. S. Luke xxii. 7-14; S. John xx. 19-23.

Picture. 1. *The Upper Chamber*—long, low tables surrounded by couches, on which our Lord and the Apostles were reclining as they celebrated the last pass-over. Then see our Lord take the bread and give thanks and bless and break it. See Him, too, with the cup in His hand. Hear Him saying "This is My Body," "This is My Blood."

2. *The same Upper Chamber*, three days later—the

¹ This subject has been dealt with in the author's book, "The Sacramental Principle" (Messrs. Longmans, 3s. 6d.).

assembled Apostles—discussing the news which the women have brought of His Resurrection. Then voices are hushed and all eyes turn in one direction. “Jesus came and stood in the midst and saith unto them, ‘Peace be unto you : . . . as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.’ And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whosoever sins ye forgive they are forgiven unto them : whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.’ ”

CONSIDER.

1. *The Wonder of this Act.* The deed done and the words spoken in the upper room in an obscure street in Jerusalem, have won from the ages an eternal echo. Listen ! you can hear those words, “This is My Body ” —“ This is My Blood ” day by day, echoing all down the ages and all round the world from hundreds of thousands of Altars in every land. Why ? Because the Passion of our dear Redeemer which is enshrined in the Holy Eucharist is timeless—eternal. The Lamb of God whose death we plead before the Father in every Eucharist “hath been slain from the foundation of the world ” (Rev. xiii. 8), and the glory of the Lamb will echo on for all eternity in the songs of the Redeemed. The sacrifice which we represent in the Holy Eucharist is not merely an historical event. It was once for all wrought out in Time upon the stage of history : yet this was but the temporal manifestation of God’s eternal purpose to redeem. All that is in harmony with God’s will and purpose is eternal ; it can never die or pass away.

2. *Eternal Life.* Eternal life is life which is in union with God. That which is not in union with God dies and passes away. It is temporal and mortal. God offers to

us in Christ eternal life, not as a future reward but as a present condition. In all His teaching our Lord never speaks of eternal life as that which we shall have some day, but always as that which we may have *here and now*. "This is" (not "shall be") "life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (S. John xvii. 3). "He that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath" (not "shall have") "eternal life" (S. John v. 24). "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life: and I will raise Him up at the last day" (S. John vi. 54). "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

The Way of Unity lies then in that wonderful Atonement which Christ has wrought for us and into which He uplifts us in the Sacraments, and in that responsive faith by which the soul surrenders itself in perfect self-abandonment to be possessed by God. Our aim must be a perfect union of heart and mind and will with the heart and mind and will of God, so that we love what He loves, and hate what He hates, think what He thinks, and choose what He wills.

3. *Sacrifice.* The Holy Eucharist is the Christian Sacrifice in which we plead before the Father the perfect sacrifice of Christ. But we must not offer Him alone. We must offer ourselves with Him. For we are a living part of Him, members of Christ—His Body. And when our great High Priest offers Himself to the Father He offers us as well. To sacrifice is "*sacrum facere*," "to make sacred," to consecrate; and at every Eucharist we offer God "ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice" to Him. We consecrate ourselves to Him and to His service: and He

takes possession of us, to use us as His agents "that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us."

Before each Eucharist you should inspect your sacrifice to see that it is as perfect as you can make it, that there is no part of your heart and mind and will which you are withholding from God. One great motive of contrition will be that venial sins, even when they do not imperil the soul, spoil the beauty of your offering of yourself to God.

4. *The Shrine of Mystery.* In the Holy Eucharist every divine Mystery of the Union of God with Man is enshrined. It is our Bethlehem, where, in fulfilment of His promise, the Word becomes flesh and dwells amongst us. It is our Calvary, where the holy Body is broken and the precious Blood outpoured. It is our Garden of the Resurrection, where we meet our Risen Lord and He calls us by name. It is our Mount of the Ascension, whence He uplifts us to dwell with Him in Heavenly places. It is our Atonement, by which He makes us at one with God the Father and with one another: "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one" (S. John xvii. 23).

MEDITATION ON THE ASCENSION

Read. S. Luke xxiv. 36 to end. Text, S. John xiv. 2, 3. Ask for a heavenly mind to love and desire God.

Picture. 1. *A mountain near Bethany.* See the little village at its foot, where in the home of Mary and Martha He had so often rested. See far off to the south, Bethlehem, where He was born. See to the west, Jerusalem and Calvary, where He was crucified.

2. See on the mountain a group of His disciples, and in the midst the Risen Lord—radiant, beautiful, His hands

raised in blessing. Hear His words as He blesses them, "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses" (Acts i. 8). Behold Him parted from them. See and hear the two Angels speaking to the Disciples.

3. *See the Disciples walking back to Jerusalem. What awe, what joy, on every face!*

CONSIDER.

1. *A Supernatural Gospel.* He relies on supernatural Power—Power from on High. Intellect, wealth and high position may be useful and should be consecrated, but they are in no way essential to the Church; they may become even a danger to her. The patronage of scholars, millionaires and kings has often dragged down the Church to a merely natural level and made it worldly. Our Lord did not choose brilliant philosophers, nor wealthy merchants, nor mighty generals as His first Apostles. He chose men who were ignorant and unlearned, so that the Church might learn to rely on supernatural Power and not on natural ability. The message of the Gospel is not redemption by scholarship, but redemption by "Christ the power of God, and the Wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men: and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong: and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that He might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God" (1 Cor. i. 24–30). This does not mean that God wants you to neglect your richest development.

The parables of the Talents and the Pounds (S. Matt. xxv. 14-30 ; S. Luke xix. 12-27) teach us that we are to make the very best of such abilities as God has given us. Yet, on the other hand, you are not to be discouraged if you are not richly endowed with worldly equipment. It is not by your cleverness or your wealth that the Church will be strengthened, but by the moral qualities of faithfulness and humility and self-surrender. God has sufficient Power to redeem the world. All that He deigns to want is agents who will yield themselves unreservedly to Him in perfect self-surrender, so that the Holy Spirit may work through them upon mankind.

“O Lord God, look on me in my ignorance and weakness ; I am ashamed to offer myself to Thee for Thy service, for I have so little to offer, and that little has been defiled by my sin, and stunted by my sloth and selfishness. But I long to yield myself up to Thee in perfect self-surrender. Thou canst wash my defilement and strengthen my weakness. Do not cast me away as worthless : but fill me with Thyself and use me for Thy glory.”

2. *The Ascension reveals Man's Destiny.* God did not create you in order that all might end in dust and worms. He created you to be His eternal companion. Our Lord bears up to Heaven something which He did not bring down—His human nature. And He enthrones it in the Heart of God that where He is we may be also. “I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, there ye may be also” (S. John xiv. 2, 3).

Nothing that you do or suffer aright is lost. Your strivings against temptation, your tears of penitence, your hopes and fears, your love and aspiration will not end in the grave. They all go to build up your soul and that spiritual body which preserves your identity. Every

holy thought you think is woven into the texture of your soul. Exercise yourself in the prayer of aspiration, fixing your mind on our Ascended Lord amidst His glorious company of saints and angels, and then constantly breathing out a prayer of desire, such as "My soul is athirst for Thee, O God, my God." "As the hart panteth for the water brooks, so longeth my soul for Thee, O God" (Ps. xlii. 1, 2).

3. "*With Him continually to dwell.*" The Christian Life is one which is lived out under the open Heavens. It is anchored beyond the veil. The unconverted man lives a life centred in this world, a life which lies between the cradle and the grave, a life which mainly appreciates merely sensual enjoyments and only occasionally makes timid excursions into the Spirit world. To the unconverted this temporal earthly life is the only one of which he can be absolutely assured by the evidence of his senses. The Spiritual world seems to him to rest on no certain warrant, chiefly on the doubtful speculations of philosophers and theologians. Physical life seems a certainty, spiritual life a dream more or less beautiful.

To the converted man the position is reversed. "Like as a dream when one awaketh" (Ps. lxxiii. 19), so when we awaken to the reality of the spiritual and eternal world, the world that is physical and temporal seems like a dream. Science teaches us that the physical world is all in flux, ever-changing, never abiding. The dust which makes the body of Cæsar to-day is made into a brick to-morrow. The shells which shield fish at the bottom of the sea to-day become the chalk of the downs to-morrow. All is fluctuating, flowing from one form to another. Nothing is permanent. All is a passing show. History reveals the same fluctuations. Nations prosper and decay. Empires rise and fall.

But in the Spiritual sphere, on the plane of the spirits you find, Reality, Truth, Permanence. Such qualities as Truth, Goodness, Righteousness, Justice, Holiness do not change. They are the same for all ages, though our ability to appreciate them, and the formulæ in which we express them grow and develop as the education of the soul progresses in the experience of the race. Spiritual values are eternal, and we trace them through Christ to the Nature of God. In Christ we find Truth, Reality, and Permanence. In Him your soul knows that it has found that which satisfies it.

So the converted man lives the life which is centred in God, the eternal life. From the Heavenly plane where his "life is hid with Christ in God" he stoops down to play his part in the fluctuating life of the world, until death liberates his life into full activity. "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 1-3).

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thine only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

MEDITATION ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

Read. S. John xiv. 15-18, 21, 23, 26; xvi. 7-15; Acts i. 8; ii. 1-4.

1. *His Work.* In the way of Purification, the Holy Spirit shows us ourselves as we truly are in God's sight,

and convinces us of sin and judgment, and awakens in us a hatred of sin. In the way of Illumination, He shows us Jesus as He is, and convinces us of righteousness, as we learn to love and desire Jesus above all. In the way of Unity, He unites us to God. In a word, His work is not to take the place of an absent Jesus, but to make Him present in us—"not to supply an absence, but to accomplish a Presence."

2. *Self-surrender.* All that God asks of us is to abandon ourselves to Him in entire self-surrender as Blessed Mary did (S. Luke i. 38). Then the Holy Spirit will overshadow us, and the life of Jesus, bestowed on us in Holy Baptism, will unfold within us. All we can offer is the active, eager, loving co-operation of our wills with every suggestion or inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

3. *The End of Man* is to know and love and serve God here. It is the Holy Spirit who teaches us to know God, inspires us to love Him, and enables us to serve Him. He is Light, Love and Power. Because all the work is of God and not the result of our own unassisted efforts, it follows that great riches, talents, learning, influence, good health, etc., are not necessary, but may even be a great hindrance to our life's work by inflaming pride and destroying humility. God's strength "is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 9).

4. *Union with God* is the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. By the Sacraments He makes you a partaker of the Divine Nature; in meditation He unites your heart, and mind, and will to the Heart, and Mind, and Will of God; in answer to prayer He unites God's strength to your weakness; in Holy Communion, His work is consummated as all Creation is brought again into union with God.

5. *The Holy Catholic Church.* In redeeming the World Christ did not write a book. He formed a Society of Spirit-bearing men and women, who were incorporated into His life and possessed by the Holy Spirit. This is His Body, through which He acts and speaks and continues to work out the World's redemption. Each Spirit-bearing person must contribute his best to the life of the whole—his best judgment, his best activities, his best devotion. The Church does not consist merely of the officials who rule and guide it—the bishops, priests and deacons. These are differentiated functions of the Body of Christ. They act for the whole Body. The Body is the Body of our Great High Priest; and every member of it is a priest. You are just as much a priest as any clergyman is. But the clergyman is a *ministerial* priest, one who acts for the Body in its corporate activity, just as your hand or foot acts for your body to fulfil its common purposes: while you are an *individual* priest who has not been commissioned to act for the body.

As your own body is composed of thousands of millions of cells, each one of which has an independent life of its own and yet finds its only true life in spending itself for the good of the whole body; so the Body of Christ, the Holy Catholic Church, is made up of millions of persons each one of whom has an individual life of his own, which can only find full self-realization in self-sacrifice, in spending all its energies not on itself but on the life of the whole. Each soldier in the Army must be free and brave and thoughtful, a person whose conscience must be respected and whose freedom must be preserved. Yet each soldier knows that the five million men in the Army can only find their true freedom and their full self-realization in ready obedience to lawful authority and in self-sacrifice for the common good.

If you are sick, some of the cells in your body are failing to perform their function aright. So when evils appear in the Church, some of its members are failing to perform their functions, or seeking selfish ends in such a way as to neglect the common welfare of the whole Church. Examine yourself then on your priestly functions, which are to offer sacrifice, to intercede, to bless and to forgive. Are you offering yourself to God day by day at Mass in union with the sacrifice of Christ? Does the spirit of self-sacrifice make you really and habitually unselfish? Are you regular in your communion with God in meditation? Are you fervent in intercession? Are you contributing all you can of love, devotion and enthusiasm, of efficient work and material means to the Church, the Body of Christ? Are you quickly ready to forgive those who offend or injure you?

LECTURE ON THE PRESENCE OF GOD

God is present in Heaven by His glory; "The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork" (Ps. xix. 1).

In the Universe by His power: "All things have been created through Him, and unto Him: and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist" (Col. i. 17), "upholding all things by the word of His power" (Heb. i. 3).

In the Sacraments by His grace: "Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ" (S. John i. 17).

In His Word by its inspiration: "Men spake from God being moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 S. Peter i. 21).

In all men by His witness in conscience: "There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man coming into the world" (S. John i. 9).

In Christians by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit ;
“ Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy
Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God ? ”
(1 Cor. vi. 19).

Therefore at all times and in all places we may unite
ourselves to Him by making an act of the Presence of
God. O my God, I firmly believe that :—

Thou art above me. “ The Lord sitteth above the
water flood : the Lord remaineth a King for ever ”
(Ps. xxix. 9).

Thou art beneath me. “ The eternal God is thy
dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting
arms ” (Deut. xxxiii. 27).

Thou art around me. “ If I ascend up into Heaven,
thou art there : if I make my bed in Shoel, behold,
thou art there ; if I take the wings of the morning,
and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea : even
there shall Thy hand lead me : and Thy right hand
shall hold me ” (Ps. cxxxix. 8).

Thou art within me. “ If any man love Me, he will
keep my word ; and My Father will love him, and
We will come and make Our abode with him ” (S. John
xiv. 23).

Thou art before me. “ Thou shalt show me the
path of life ; in Thy presence is the fulness of joy ;
and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for ever
more ” (Ps. xvi. 12).

Thou art behind me. “ Thine ears shalt hear a
word behind thee, saying, This is the way ; walk ye
in it ” (Is. xxx. 21).

Thou art to my right hand to guard me. "I have set the Lord always before me : because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved " (Ps. xvi. 8).

Thou art to my left hand to warn me. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption " (Ep. iv. 30).

And Thou art in all whom I may meet. "I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one " (S. John xvii. 23). "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me " (S. Matt. xxv. 40).

Help me to know Thee.

Help me to love Thee.

Help me to serve Thee.

The Practice of the Presence of God is the spring of Holiness.

1. *It is the first principle of Prayer.* Many persons fail in prayer, and become disgusted with the futility of their devotions, because they neglect the first essential of all prayer, the realization of the Presence of God. They approach God in prayer in a careless, slovenly way, with a familiarity which they would not think of showing toward an earthly monarch : they rattle off a string of petitions asking for what they want, and after two minutes their distracted devotions are ended, they are again absorbed in the world which they have never wholly banished from their mind. No wonder that they say, "My prayers do me no good." "It seems useless to pray, a mere waste of time." This is true of such scatter-brained "devotions." If you have five minutes to devote to prayer it is well to spend three minutes in

realizing God's Presence within you. Sit or kneel quietly, and calm your brain. Shut off deliberately all worldly thoughts of business, or pleasure, or the conversations you have had with others, or the difficulties which await you. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exod. iii. 5). The "shoes" are that by which you are in contact with the dust and defilement of the earthly life. Then gather in all the wandering thoughts which have spread themselves over the whole surface of your life, and concentrate them on one point. These two processes are detachment from the world and attachment to God : or, in other words, distraction and attention ; withdrawal from the world, and concentration on God. This is very difficult for some persons as they have formed a habit of mental dissipation which makes any mental concentration a painful process : even when reading a book they do it in a slack way, browsing over it while their mind wanders to other things. They habitually allow the force of their soul to dribble away through many a leak. They seldom concentrate their mind on anything : and this must be cured if they wish to pray with joy and power. It is desirable either to shut your eyes or else to fasten them on some object of devotion, such as a crucifix.

When you have thus put off the shoes of your mind you are ready to enter the antechamber of the Presence, where you should wash your soul by a confession of sin. "Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me : cast me not away from Thy Presence and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" (Ps. li. 10).

Then you are ready to enter the Presence Chamber of your soul, where God abides in the centre of your life. On your entrance make an Act of Adoration of God's Majesty, bowing the soul before Him who is not only your Father

but also King of kings and Lord of lords, who is perpetually surrounded with the undistracted adoration of the Cherubim, and all the Angel Hosts. By this time you are in a fit frame of mind to listen to what God may wish to say to you. This is the first point of Prayer. If you were allowed into the Presence Chamber of an earthly King you would not burst forth with your Petition : you would wait until he had spoken.

When five minutes are to be spent in prayer, three minutes may be spent in realizing the Presence of God, one minute in petition, and one minute in thanksgiving. It must be borne in mind that the object of prayer is not to bend God's will to ours, but to bring ours into harmony with His. This process of realizing God's Presence before speaking to Him in prayer may seem elaborate. But it will be so only to the worldly-minded. When once the habit of the recollection of God's Presence has been formed there is no difficulty in entering upon prayer : for that soul can concentrate itself readily upon Him which is never unmindful of His Presence.

2. *God's Presence in Nature.* The thought of God's Presence in Nature, upholding all that is, interpenetrating the whole Universe of stars and flowers which live only in His mind and will, will react on the thought of God's Presence in your heart. On the mountain-top the patriarchs met Him and held communion with Him and He still manifests Himself to men through the beauty of Nature. A great Canadian Scout, who has distinguished himself in two wars, once told me that though he had never learnt to pray he knew what it was to hold communion with his Maker. For sometimes, after months of lonely trapping in the Rocky Mountains, when he was sitting by himself on some solitary peak, all the prairie and mountains and rivers and forests would fade away,

and he would be conscious of nothing but the Presence of God. This trance in which he learned to worship would last sometimes for half an hour.

3. *God's Presence in Man.* It is the secret of zeal for souls, and of Christian courtesy, and of social enthusiasm habitually to remember God's Presence in every man. Christ is in every soul whether that soul recognizes His presence or not. He is there by His all-embracing, universal, unchanging love—either crucified again in the soul which sins wilfully, or buried in indifference, or rising from the tomb in a true repentance, or ascending again in lofty aspirations after holiness. Herein lies the spring of enthusiasm in works of charity or social justice, that we know that every body of those who are baptized is a temple of the Holy Ghost, a shrine of Deity, a sanctuary of the most High God : and that in ministering to them we are serving Him who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye have done it unto Me."

4. *The Presence of God in the Blessed Sacrament.* The Presence of God in the Universe and in Man is gathered up to a burning point in the Blessed Sacrament, as the rays of the sun which bathe the whole earth in its light and warmth are focussed in a burning-glass. We bring the dust of the earth, the material of the Universe, the Bread and the Wine, and offer them to God. They are uplifted into union with Christ and become His Body and His Blood, the veil of His Presence, and the channels of His life. Beneath these outward forms we adore the Presence of Him whom we have already worshipped in Nature and in Man, and who comes in the Blessed Sacrament in His Divine Humanity.

LECTURE ON THE WILL OF GOD

If we wish to attain to true holiness and perfection, to an unconquerable patience and to perfect peace, we must meditate frequently upon the duty of conformity to the Will of God. This duty is based on two foundation principles :—

First : That our perfection consists in this conformity to the Will of God, and that, the greater this conformity is, the greater will be our perfection.

Second : That nothing happens in this world but by the Will of God.

But when we speak of the Will of God, it is necessary to distinguish between its twofold aspect—His will of permission and His will of design. For instance, when a drunkard drinks himself to death you must not say merely “this is the will of God,” as though the man had carried out God’s will, when really he has gone clean against God’s will. On the other hand, it is God’s will of design that you should co-operate with Him in the redemption of the world. If you do not choose to do so, He will not force your will. If you choose to act against Him He will even allow you to do so. The father in the Parable (S. Luke xv. 11–32) did not *design* that his younger son should leave home and waste his life in sin. He *allowed* it, for he might have prevented it if he had deprived his son of his free will and locked him up in the cellar. The father wanted to win his son’s love; and with this in view he could not deprive him of freedom. For love is the free offering of oneself; and where there is no freedom, there can be no true love. So it is with God our Father. His will of design is that you

should love and serve Him and co-operate with Him for the redemption of the world. But He also wills that you shall be free. Therefore, if you choose to refuse to love and serve Him and to co-operate with Him, He allows you to do this. This is according to His will of *permission*; but it is not according to His will of *design*. So if you sin you must not say "God wills this." All that can be said is that He allows it; He will overrule it so that it will not frustrate His ultimate purpose for the world. But you will lose your soul if you sin wilfully; your opportunity will be lost of co-operating with His Will of Design for yourself and for the world.

From this three consequences follow:—

1. *Conformity to the will of God is your Duty.* You are not here to do your *own* will, but to do the will of God.

2. *Conformity to the will of God is the source of unconquerable patience.* Whatever comes upon you through the action of others, whether good or evil, is either according to God's will of design or according to His will of permission. If it is contrary to His will of design, He will overrule it for your good, so as to bring good out of evil. Hence you will be able to bear with invincible patience whatever comes upon you. When you have done your best, you may calmly say, "It is the will of God." When you are subject to unkindness or injustice or are surrounded by evil men who place hindrances in the way to your plans for God's glory, you are right to protest against the wrong with all your power. But when you have done your best and cannot alter things, you should maintain a righteous protest and yet be able to accept patiently whatever comes upon you and say, "It is the will of God."

Our dear Lord knew that there was no other way in which to redeem the world than by His voluntary death. This, then, was the purpose with which He had come into the world ; this was the Father's Will which He had come to do. So when He was surrounded by sin and evil, by cruelty and treachery, by false accusation and injustice, He was able to look beyond the sins of men and to keep His gaze fixed upon the Will of God. He did not say, "The cup which Judas (or Pilate) gives Me, shall I not drink it ?" He said, "The cup which the Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it ?" (S. John xviii. 11). When Pilate said to Him, "Knowest Thou not that I have power to release Thee, and have power to crucify Thee ?" our Lord looked past and beyond him to the Father, and answered, "Thou wouldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above" (S. John xix. 10, 11).

If then you desire to do the will of God, you must not resent suffering, or become embittered if you are surrounded by misunderstanding, misrepresentation, false accusation, cruelty and injustice. Did you not generously resolve to follow our Lord faithfully to the end ? Surely you did not mean to do this only in prosperity. When such bitter trials come upon you, you may shrink at first from them and cry, "Father, save me from this hour." But you must learn to cry in entire self-surrender, "Father, glorify Thy name" (S. John xii. 27, 28). You may in your weakness cry, "Father, let this cup pass from me." But you must learn in the strength of Jesus to cry, "Nevertheless not my will but Thine be done" (S. Matt. xxvi. 39).

Only those who have learned to share in "the tribulation and patience of Jesus" (Rev. i. 9) can help Him to redeem the world. Only those can know fully "the

power of His resurrection " who have learned to rejoice in " the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed to His death " (Phil. iii. 10). Only those who die with Him can live with Him, and only those who suffer with Him can reign with Him.

So, when you have done your best to win those who are opposed to you, if your loving and gentle efforts to remove misunderstanding fail, look past the sins of men, and learn unconquerable patience by fastening your gaze upon the Will of God. This will save you from two opposite errors : the fatalism which exaggerates the predestination of God, and the fussiness which exaggerates the freedom of man. You need more than mere passive resignation ; you need active co-operation—not " Thy will be borne," but " Thy will be done."

3. *Conformity to the Will of God is the source of perfect peace.* "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee ; because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever ; for in the Lord Jehovah is an everlasting Rock " (Is. xxvi. 4). Remember it is God who rules the world—not you ! He did not tell you to manage it in His absence, but to co-operate with Him in His presence. When you have done your best, rest quite calmly in Him.

What is it that destroys Peace ? First : Sin. If you sin, repent at once and He will pardon you, and reunite your will to His. " Though he fall, he shall not be cast away : for the Lord upholdeth Him with His hand " (Ps. xxxvii. 24). Gradually you will learn, whether in adversity or in prosperity, to have none other will but His.

Secondly : Anxiety and worry about yourself or for others. Remember He loves you more even than you

can love yourself : and He loves those others too, more than you love them. He will do His best for them if you do yours. When you have done yours, then leave them calmly and trustfully to Him.

Our Lord teaches us to trust in God's care for us. "Be not anxious" for food or drink or clothing (S. Matt. vi. 31). No sparrow falls to the ground without your Father. The hairs of your head are all numbered (S. Matt. x. 29, 30). The Christian's rule is to work as though all depended upon him, and to rest as though all depended on God. When you have done your best don't worry. Rest calmly ; for "underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. xxxiii. 27) ; "casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 S. Peter v. 7). "Commit thy way unto the Lord, and put thy trust in Him ; and He shall bring it to pass" (Ps. xxxvii. 5). "O cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall nourish thee ; and shall not suffer the righteous to fall for ever" (Ps. lv. 23). Remember that a calm and peaceful spirit can be cultivated. It is not an accident of temperament, but the fruit of self-surrender to the Will of God. When you are tempted to worry, to brooding or to excessive anxiety, you will needlessly torment yourself if you turn round and round within your mind in a weary circle. Make a break. Look at your crucifix. Make the holy sign, and say again and again, "Father, not my will but Thine be done."

Thus, uniting your will to the Will of God, you have already the assurance of victory and an abiding Peace : for God's Will must inevitably triumph in the end.

LECTURE ON THE LOVE OF GOD

Read the First Epistle of S. John.

The Unitive Way and the Life of Perfection, in fact, the whole Christian Religion, may be summed up in the one word—Love.

1. *The Nature of God.* “God is love,” and by this all theology and philosophy, and all life must be tested. The love of God is eternal, not temporal: it did not begin to be when the world was created. Before the Universe was called into being—God *is* love. But it may be said love is impossible for a single isolated solitary person, indeed if we could even conceive of such a thing as a single person. Love is of the very essence of personality. Self-bestowal and self-sacrifice are the very essence of Love. So we do not believe in a God who is a single Person. Again, Love is not at its highest when it is merely mutual, between two, for each receives back what he gives. Love is at its highest when the love of one for another is embodied in a third—as when the love of a father and mother is incarnate in a child. So we believe that in the One Godhead there are three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and all Eternity is aflame with Love. Sin, passion, hatred, envy, jealousy, lust and selfishness are a passing shadow which cloud for a time our appreciation of the love of God, and at the same time by contrast reveal its splendour. But it is a great and abiding joy to know that the background of the Universe, and of Time and Space, is not Death, Darkness and Selfishness, but Life, Light and Love.

2. *The Test of Life.* The love of God gives us the test by which all life must be tried. It tests our theo-

logical conceptions and our ecclesiastical life. "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love" (1 S. John iv. 8). It reminds us that our redemption is corporate, not individual, that souls are not saved in isolation as single units, but in fellowship by being incorporated into the Body of Christ, the Holy Catholic Church. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 S. John i. 3). It gives the final test of our political and economic life. For, as in the very being and nature of the Ever-blessed Trinity there is Personality and Fellowship, so in the life of man we must respect personality, and aim at fellowship. Man must not be used as an instrument, as in slavery and our present wage system; for this is to degrade personality. Economics must not treat any man as an isolated unit. He is made in the image of God; and this demands respect for personality, and that fellowship in which alone personality can be realized.

3. *The end or purpose of Life.* The Love of God, as seen in the Ever-Blessed Trinity, Personality and Fellowship, gives us that without which human life is a tragedy of aimlessness. It teaches us that the aim or end of all history is the formation of all human beings into one great Brotherhood beneath the Fatherhood of God. There is no love of God which is not shown in the love of man. Where love is, there is God. Where love is not, God is not there. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom He hath not seen." And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also (1 S. John iv. 20).

This gives us the key to the reconstruction of Society on the one and only possible basis on which it can endure. The love of God is the only possible basis of human life which works out inevitably in Brotherhood, Fellowship. And the simple rule of Brotherhood is that we must never ask for ourselves what we do not ask for others. If we want Freedom, Justice, Righteousness for ourselves we must demand them for all others. This is the great Law of Love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength ; and thy neighbour as thyself."

4. *Self-realization and Self-sacrifice.* In contrast to the hateful doctrine of pride and self-assertion as the way to self-realization, the love of God teaches us that the only way to self-realization is by self-sacrifice. We must lose our life—spend it not upon ourselves, but in the service of others—if we would save it. For love is not a sentiment, but *an energy of the will* moving out in self-bestowal. The love of God is an eternal will to all good for all men. It is revealed not in word, but in deed. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 S. John iv. 10). Self-sacrifice and self-bestowal are the marks of Love. "The Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World" (1 S. John iv. 14).

The love of God is not a sweet sentiment or a fervent emotion, or that weak good nature which Englishmen admire, and which is often slothful moral indifference. God's Love is a stern and righteous will which loves you too much to allow you to destroy yourself with sin, and therefore chastises and torments the sinner : but Incarnate Love first bore the chastisement and suffered the torments Himself, to provide the remedy for your sin. Christianity is the final and Catholic or

Universal Religion, because nothing is greater than love. And the death of the Son of God upon the Cross is the symbol of the World's redemption, because it is infinite in the depths of its condescension and humiliation, and in the height of its self-sacrificing love.

5. *Universal and Individual.* The love of God is universal—No man is omitted from its embrace—even the blackest sinner is still surrounded by the love against which he is in rebellion. God's love is impartial. He bestows it equally upon all according to the capacity of each soul to receive it. "But are not some especially chosen as the elect of God?" Yes; but they are chosen *not for their own sake*, but for the sake of others: they are elected or chosen in order that they may win others to God. But not only is God's Love catholic—universal—all embracing. It is also individual, personal, intimate. Both before and after the Resurrection our dear Lord showed an intimate personal knowledge and love for each apostle. He loves you as He loved Peter and John. And since He created you in order that you might be His companion for all eternity, you must instinctively refer all things to Him now—your sorrows, perplexities, worries, joys, loves, hopes. God desires you to confide in Him.

The Crown of the Unitive Way then is that love of God which so penetrates us as to make us one with Him in the great At-one-ment. "I in them, and Thou in Me; that they may be perfected into one" (S. John xvii. 23) is the end of all creation—the interpenetration of the human by the Divine, the union—re-union—communion of God with man.

It is of the very essence of the love of God that it is redemptive, and so must inspire in you a similar passion to redeem. It is impossible truly to know God without

fervently desiring to make Him known. True love of God cannot stay at home in the contentment of satisfied desire. It is an energy which inflames the soul with a divine discontent until every soul knows the power of that love and yields to it. Therefore that love which is the essence of your own perfection will be in you the spring of missionary zeal.

“ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another ” (1 S. John iv. 11).

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